



## THE · PERILS OF · PUSH · BUTTON MAIL

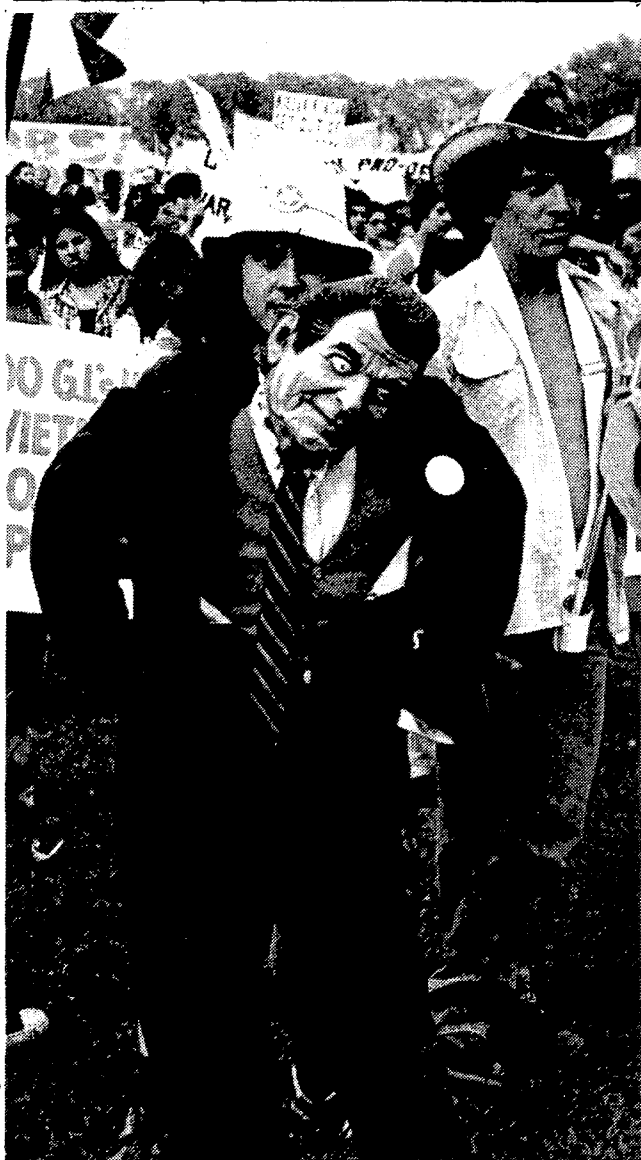
Plans to give the corporations free rein with new mail technologies may undercut the Postal Service and the unions.



## The TV Boycott · Page 19 Debate



# THE INSIDE STORY



A protester at the Illinois Coalition Against Reagan Economics (ICARE) demonstration in Chicago July 7.

## It's all over except for the suffering

By John Judis

The House of Representatives' vote June 26 on Ronald Reagan's budget cuts was virtually the last stand for liberal Democrats. But even if the Democrats had had their alternative cuts adopted, neither they nor the nation would have been much better for it.

When the House and Senate adopted the broad monetary outlines of the Reagan administration budget cuts last May, the major battle of the budget was already over. Both chambers agreed to a fiscal year 1982 budget that increased defense spending \$50 million from the 1981 budget and cut \$36 million from Jimmy Carter's penurious social spending proposals. Faced with numbers like these, even the most resourceful liberal would have had trouble coming up with proposals that didn't screw the poor.

The best that the House Democrats could have done would have been to hack away at the various tax subsidies granted to multinationals, wealthy executives and commodity speculators and then spread the cuts in social services so that they would not fall inordinately on the poor. (For example, a "means" test could have been put on social security payments to individuals with unearned incomes over \$50,000.)

But with last May's budget-cut proposals by the Black Caucus and Rep. David Obey (D-Wisc.) winning only 69 and 119 votes respectively, there was little enthusiasm for taking on 190 Republicans, the 47 members of the Conservative Democratic Forum (CDF) and about 100 so-called "moderate" Democrats like House Ways and Means chairman Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.).

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The Democratic proposal that came out of the Democratically chaired House committees accepted about 85 percent of the Reagan cuts. For instance, Rostenkowski's Ways and Means accepted the Reagan proposal to eliminate the automatic 13-week extension of unemployment benefits in states with high unemployment. The House committees also voted to cut Medicaid by 3 percent and to eliminate public jobs programs.

There were two differences between the House Democrats' bill and the administration-sponsored Gramm-Latta Bill that the House adopted by a 217-to-211 vote. First, the Democratic bill proposed to break only one arm of welfare mothers, while Gramm-Latta proposed to break both. The Democratic bill tried to retain the current form of funding—specific, targeted programs—while the Gramm-Latta bill tries to substitute block grant funding.

### Breaking both arms.

Not all the details of the Gramm-Latta bill are yet known. It was assembled for passage in a one-and-a-half inch thick stack of proposals and amendments that, among other things, included separate proposals both to fund and to eliminate funding for ocean waste dumping. But its general outlines can be ascertained:

- The Gramm-Latta bill makes more cuts in entitlement programs than the Democratic version. Entitlement programs, which allow any citizen with certain qualifications to receive aid, have been the fastest growing, because they rise with inflation and unemployment. Most programs for the poor—like Medicaid, food stamps and unemployment compensation—are in the form of entitlements. And all were targeted for cuts by the administration.

- The Gramm-Latta bill eliminates food stamps for workers on strike and tightens the eligibility for food stamps by limiting it to those with incomes of 130 percent (rather than the current 145 percent) of the poverty level. The bill also authorizes the Office of Management and the Budget to "define poverty and revise the definition of poverty for each year." (The current poverty level is \$8,450 for a family of four.) This added provision may provide additional cuts, since some prominent administration officials, like chief domestic advisor Martin Anderson, favor including non-cash disbursements such as food stamps and Medicaid in the determination of income level.

- Gramm-Latta would repeal a 1978 law providing the poor with grants to weatherize their homes. It would make worker retraining programs under the Trade Adjustment Act (for workers who lose their jobs because of foreign competition) subject to the discretion of the Department of Labor. It adds \$450 million in welfare cuts to the Democratic proposal by eliminating, after four months, "income disregards" granted to working mothers. (To encourage them to take jobs, welfare recipients used to be able to deduct the first \$30 and the remaining third of their monthly income in determining their eligibility for welfare. The Center on Social Welfare Policy and Law estimates that these cuts will affect the income of 17 percent of welfare recipients.)

- Gramm-Latta also partially rescues the administration's proposals for shifting many education and health programs from categorical grants into block grants to the states. Block grants make it possible for state governments to rechannel funds that previously might have been targeted for school integration, community health clinics, family planning, urban redevelopment or public housing. Block grants have been

widely opposed not only by minorities, but by many big-city mayors who fear their programs will get diverted by anti-urban state legislatures.

In the Democratic proposal, block grants were eliminated. In the Gramm-Latta bill, 15 health programs were consolidated into three block grants, but several, including community health clinics and family planning, were exempted. Similarly, 25 education programs were consolidated into two block grants, but programs for vocational education, poor districts and for the handicapped were kept separate.

### Administration concessions.

To secure the support of 188 Republicans and 29 Democrats, the administration made concessions to Northern Republicans like Manhattan's William Green and to Southern Democrats like Louisiana's John Breaux and Tennessee's Ed Jones. The concessions to the Republicans included increased spending for Conrail, Amtrak, urban development and mass transit, the elimination of the \$25,000 income limit on student loans and the 5 percent cap on annual increases of federal Medicaid payments to the states. But Southern Democrats extracted \$230 million to continue building Tennessee's Clinch River breeder reactor and an administration promise to fight for sugar price supports. Economists estimate that sugar price supports, as the Louisiana Democrats are proposing, will cost the consumer about \$2 billion next year.

The administration's political skill was not really demonstrated in winning over 29 Democratic votes. The Democratic Party has not had a consensus on social programs for 30 years. During the Carter administration, for instance, Democrats defected in much greater numbers when faced with administration bills: 101 voted against the administration's February 1978 bill to establish a consumer protection agency and 41 voted against the innocuous Humphrey-Hawkins full employment act.

The Reagan administration's skill was most evident in being able to command all but two Republican votes in the House. It was splits among Republicans, rather than unity among Democrats, that secured the passage of most of the important civil rights, labor, welfare and environmental legislation of the last 20 years.

The difference between now and then was not so much measured in Democrats and Republicans, as in the presence of active movements for civil rights, environmental protection and welfare rights. Many of these movements have abated. The poor no longer count as a political constituency. And except among a few black and urban legislators, there is little concern for their welfare.

### House-Senate Conference.

The House bill and the Senate bill, which is basically the Reagan proposals and worse, now go to a joint conference, which will meet from July 13 to 27 to try to resolve the differences between the two bills. Most of these differences are of the two arms or two arms-and-a-leg variety.

The conferees will have to decide whether to accept the Senate's proposal that rent subsidies be denied to cities with rent control, how to curb Medicaid expenditures, whether to adopt the House's more lenient and as yet unspecified standards for student loans and whether to accept the House's proposal for a 4.8 percent ceiling on federal pay increases for next year.

The only consolation that Democrats can claim is that they will not be blamed if these programs should turn our Northern cities into replicas of Liverpool. ■

## IN THESE TIMES

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# Postal unions may defy Reagan

The administration has declared war on cost-of-living protections -- and postal workers see themselves as frontline troops.

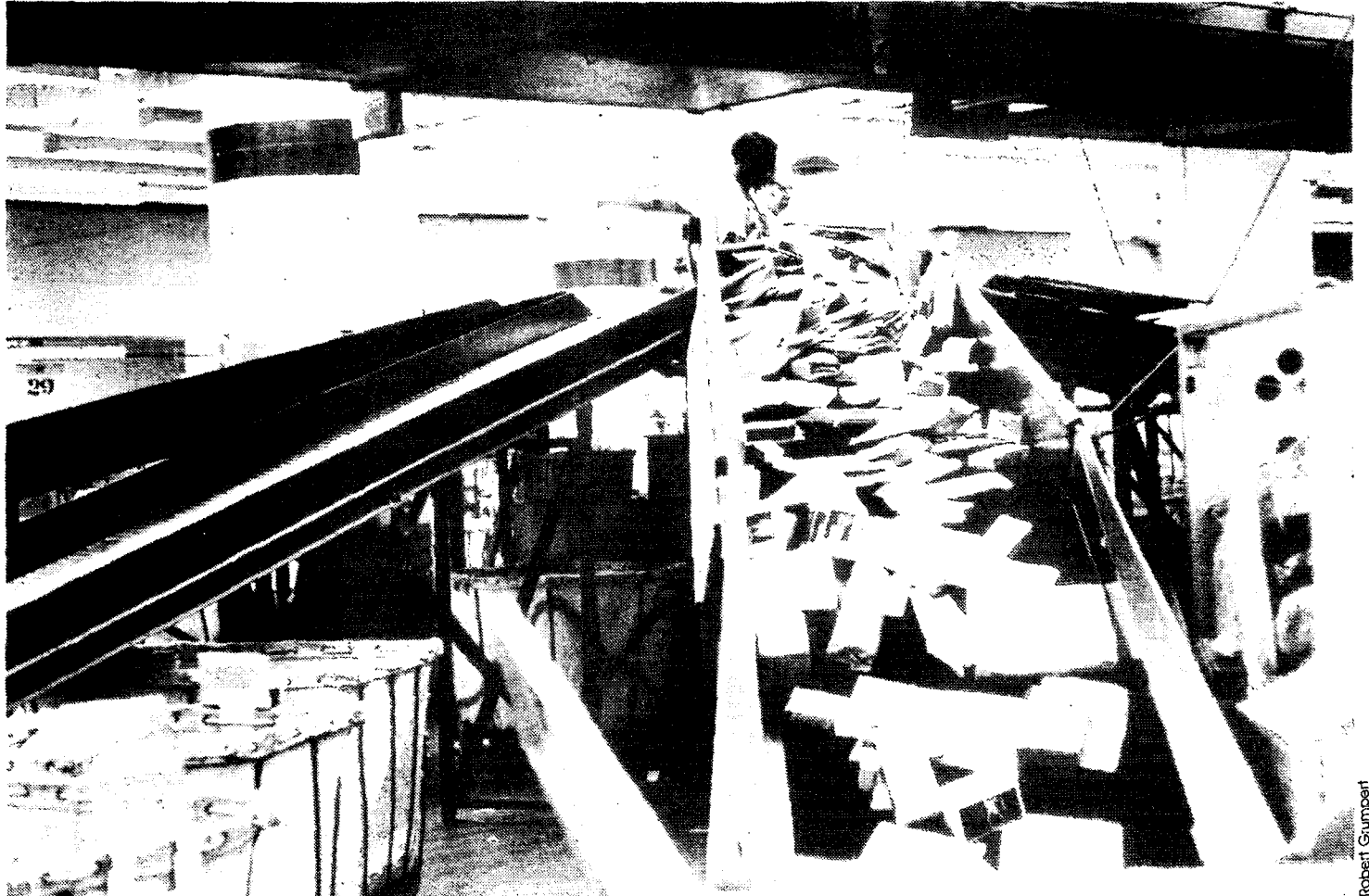
By David Moberg

**A**S THE SPIRIT OF REAGANISM sweeps through government, public employees are bracing themselves for desperate battles to keep their jobs and protect their incomes. "I think we're the front-line troops," says John Leyden, executive director of the AFL-CIO Public Employee Department, "and I think they're trying to decimate our ranks."

In the first big confrontation with public employees, the Reagan administration came out a winner by negotiating a last-minute contract with the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization that was in line with the government's original offer. But the PATCO executive board urged members to "overwhelmingly reject" the June 22 settlement. When told of the board's unanimous action, a meeting of 500 local union leaders cheered and chanted "strike, strike, strike."

Now it seems likely that members will reject the contract that granted an 11 percent annual wage increase -- far less than the union demanded -- and both extended the contract to three and a half years and failed to include any move toward a shorter work week as a means of relieving job stress.

If they do, PATCO will face an intransigent Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis, who has said that no con-



Mail sorting at a post office annex in Los Angeles

tract for the controllers offer will exceed the present \$40 million total. So air controllers could be going out on strike toward the end of July, just as the postal contracts expire on July 20.

Though leaders of the two unions that represent 500,000 of the 600,000 postal workers under contract -- Morris "Moe" Biller of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and Vincent Sombrotto of the National Association of Letter Carriers -- have both toned down their rhetoric in recent months, their earlier warnings of a strike are still valid. Serious issues divide the Postal Service under Postmaster General William Bolger, and both the unions and actions by Bolger, the Postal Rate Commission and the

White House have intensified the pressure.

In 1978 there were wildcat strikes in several locations, and later the contract was rejected by members before being sent to a mediator for final settlement. Wildcats are less likely this year. Dismissal of 226 strikers in 1978 has had a chilling effect. (One emotional demand from the unions, personally endorsed by Biller, is amnesty for the 102 who have still not been reinstated, but chances for winning this issue are slim.) But, more important, members of the two big unions appear to have greater confidence in their leaders, both of whom were once militant local leaders in the New York area, and in a bargaining process that in-

volves members and local officials more than last time.

If there is a strike, it is likely that it will be called by the national unions, which have been preparing contingency plans and called local officials to a July 14 meeting to discuss plans for a possible illegal strike. "I don't think people want to do anything unless there's unified action," one former wildcat leader now in national office said.

If their leaders say a strike is necessary, most local officials think the response will be solid, despite hesitations in some quarters. "There won't be any problem getting everybody out," Tommy Briscoe, president of the 4,900-member

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# The new technology will only ring once

By Paul D. Roose

OAKLAND, CA

**I**T IS 1985. IN A DALLAS SHOPPING center, a busy customer walks up to a bank of keyboards under a U.S. Postal Service logo. He inserts two quarters and types a 100-word letter to his mother in Indianapolis. The signals are converted to electronic pulses and transmitted to Indiana by way of a COMSAT satellite. In the Indianapolis post office the message is received and automatically printed on paper that is then automatically stuffed in an envelope. A letter carrier delivers it to Mom the next day.

Inside the postal system, however, this vision of the future looks less than marvelous. For the mail collector in Dallas, there is less work now that department stores and business that used to mail trays of bills every week instead send computer tapes with billing information to the main post office via private courier. Also, more people use the keyboard terminals for letters, cutting down on work so that his or her route may be abolished or combined with another, forcing the collector into a less desirable job.

At the Dallas post office, the substitute letter-sorting machine operator sees both hours and job security diminish as the mail is replaced by computer tapes. In Indianapolis, the letter carrier still has



## Privacy, public control and jobs are on the line in the switch to electronic mail.

a job delivering "hard copy," but he or she spends less time using the knowledge of the route for office sorting; greater pre-sorting means that the carrier has become much more of an on-the-street "packhorse."

Next January the U.S. Postal Service will initiate Electronic Computer-Originated Mail, known as E-COM. Though public keyboards for individual messages will be dramatically visible, at first big business will benefit most by delivering large computerized mailings to the post office that will then be transmitted electronically, converted to "hard copy" at receiving post offices and delivered by letter carriers.

There are three levels or "generations" of technological sophistication to Electronic Message Systems, or EMS. In Generation I, mailers can hand-deliver computer tapes or paper messages (which are converted to electronic signals by scanners in the post office) that the post office

will deliver electronically and automatically print, place in an envelope and deliver as letters at the receiving end. With Generation II, mailers electronically transmit their messages to post office computers. A big company, such as Exxon, could put its monthly billing information on tapes and transmit it to the post office, which would electronically sort and deliver the bills to customers in a day or two at a cost per unit ranging from 9 to 55 cents.

With Generation III, there will be no "hard copy." Messages sent electronically will be received on individual business and home terminals. Such technology is already used by some big corporations for intra-company messages. Direct bank transfers of federal checks are another current example of Generation III technology.

### Cui bono?

There is no question about the capacity and availability of this electronic message technology. But there are serious social questions. Who will control EMS? Can privacy in communications be protected? How much should the Postal Service and federal government be involved? What will happen to postal workers' jobs, both in numbers and in the quality of work?

As late as 1976 Postmaster General Benjamin Bailar called EMS a "practical and financial impossibility." But faced

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# Vive la difference

“In Short” stringer Dave Lindorff reports that capitalists from abroad are hauling their assets to the U.S. at a growing rate. The Socialist victory in France, he says, has sent money pouring out of that country. According to a New York diamond dealer, the dominant language in the city’s diamond markets shifted abruptly from English to French as French moneybags, seeking ways to hide their assets from an expected wealth tax, began buying investment-grade stones. One woman at Citibank says she saw a Frenchman come in with two suitcases full of cold cash in francs.

Others report that the British upper crust sees the handwriting of a resurgent left in Britain on the wall and has already begun shifting its money out of the country into real estate and tangible property in the U.S.

"They're expecting a freeze on transfer of capital out of the country when the left comes in, and then a tax on wealth," says one dealer who's getting some of the business, "so they're getting it out while they can." Of course, notes Lindorff, the loss of this capital will further hamper investment in Britain, thus helping to seal Thatcher's and the Conservatives' fate.

New York art dealers report that rich Italians are buying big in the U.S. in an effort to get money out of their country—despite the weakness of the lira against the dollar. And there are signs that the ruling classes in Latin America are feeling less than secure: Barons and landowners in such places as Brazil, Argentina, Colombia and Central America have been sending their cash up north for real estate and smaller valuables that can easily be hidden and moved around.

## Cause for alarms

Half of the country's nuclear power plants missed a July 1 deadline for installation of emergency alarms to alert the surrounding population to a serious accident. But the problem goes deeper. As Westchester county executive Alfred DelBello remarked when New York State failed to present an adequate overall emergency plan by an earlier deadline, "The public should not be deceived into thinking that when the sirens go off there's a plan behind it." Rep. Toby Moffett (D-Conn.), who chairs the House Environment, Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee, sent a letter to the chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission alleging "little convincing NRC enforcement action" on the emergency planning deadlines. In explaining the delay on installing alarms, one utility spokesman claimed that many utilities had placed orders with the same alarm manufacturer at about the same time—which, at least in some cases, was apparently less than a month before the deadline. "It seems," Joan Holt of the New York Public Interest Research Group told "In Short," "that the NRC is sending a message to the utilities that it's not going to enforce the regulations seriously."

# U.S. is true to formula

Fred Clarkson of the Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFACT) reports that the infant formula problem, thought by many to be limited to the Third World ("In Short," June 3), is also a serious health issue in this country. Public Advocates, a San Francisco-based public-interest law firm, testified recently to a congressional subcommittee that there are "at least 5,000 infant deaths per year attributable to infant formula misuse and bottle feeding among low-income families in the U.S." Public Advocates also cited certain diseases that occur at a much higher rate among bottle-fed babies than among those fed from the breast. All those conditions take their acutest form in low-income areas, where over- or under-dilution of formula—often with unclean water—can result in severe diarrhea, vomiting, kidney disease, malnutrition or gastroenteritis.

And, despite a trend back to breast feeding among upper-income groups, according to the testimony, the poor are bottle feeding their babies in the vast majority of cases. Taking figures from 1979, for example, 90 percent of the mothers who delivered in private hospitals breast fed, while less than 5 percent of the mothers in public hospitals did the same. Poor mothers receive little, if any, prenatal counseling on infant feeding, so their decisions on the issue are likely to be influenced by the free samples of formula and industry-produced "educational" materials that understaffed public hospitals often distribute. But there's no cause for worry, according to State Department spokesperson Eleanor Constable, who has said that the World Health Organization's "Code for the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes"—against which Reagan's emissaries cast the lone "no" vote—is "largely irrelevant to the U.S., a country where there is an educated populace, where there is safe drinking water and where there is extensive health care."

—Josh Kornbluth



*Some 1,500 lesbians, gay men and their supporters marched through downtown Seattle on June 27, calling for gay rights and protesting against right-wing policies and attitudes. Endorsed by more than 50 organizations, Seattle's "1981 Lesbian/Gay Freedom March" marked the 12th anniversary of a riot against police harassment at the Stonewall Inn in New York City, an incident that helped spark the modern gay liberation movement.*

# Out, out, damn corporate spot

Will we still call it "public" broadcasting in 1984? Just barely, if the latest actions in Washington are any guide.

If success were the criterion, public broadcasting would be rolling in funding. Public radio listeners are at an all-time high, and the latest audience figures show that nearly three-quarters of all American homes watched public TV in March. But public broadcasting bucks the Stockman position that government should have no part of broadcasting (*In These Times*, April 29 and May 13).

Congress appears to be backing Stockman up, if not enthusiastically. In June some of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's advance funding—for 1983—was rescinded. This money had been allocated in advance to protect the system from political retribution, and with rescission the principle appears lost. As for CPB's 1984-1986 authorization, it was attached to the budget in the Senate, which made it nearly impossible to mobilize protest over the low level of funding.

The House has passed an appropriations bill whose amendments are perhaps more important in the long run than the dollar figures in the main body of the bill. One of them approves an 18-month trial run of commercials up to four minutes an hour on 10 public TV stations and 10 public radio stations.

Some claim that commercials have already arrived. Two months ago a new FCC ruling went into effect that allows stations to display corporate logos of underwriters. Now PBS has set up guidelines allowing those logos to be animated, accompanied by identifying audio and names of single products.

Public interest groups—including the Committee to Save KQED (San Francisco), the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and four others—filed a petition with the FCC to reconsider that ruling. So did the National Association of Broadcasters, which wants to keep public TV out of competition for its advertisers. Both groups ask a good question: What is the difference, with the new logo guidelines, between identification and promotion? They may not get an answer from the new head of the FCC, Mark Fowler, who has been happily announcing the era of “un-regulation” to anyone who will listen since his appointment was approved.

Raising ad revenue on the air and also in *The Dial* (a program guide that was recently extended to four more cities) is one of several commercial gambits that some public TV stations are expanding (*In These Times*, Dec. 17, 1980). "PBS/Cable," the latest version of PBS' pay TV plan, would link up with art institutions like theaters, museums and symphonies to produce cultural programs for a monthly cable fee. Boosting revenue this year is the rental of publicly-funded hardware for commercial purposes.

The money crunch has driven deeper wedges between groups in the public broadcasting "community." One of the most marked divisions became public at the June annual membership meeting of PBS stations in Cincinnati, where the biggest public TV stations (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston and sometimes San Francisco, Detroit and Miami) chafed at the one-station, one-vote rule that lumped them with the smaller stations.

The big stations, as Chicago station president William McCarter openly acknowledged at an April board of directors meeting, look upon shrinking federal subsidy as an opportunity to expand their for-profit operations. Smaller stations, dependent both on federal dollars and on the bigger stations' programming, can only suffer from cutbacks. "We are an almost entirely different business than they are," said KCET (Los Angeles) president Jim Loper, an impatient member of the unraveling broadcasting "system."

## Suit challenges anti-alien policy

**LOS ANGELES**—The ability of thousands of undocumented workers to obtain health care is now being threatened by a Los Angeles policy that is itself the subject of a nationally significant lawsuit.

In March, a newly elected, politically conservative Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted to require anyone unable to pay for county health care to sign up for Medi-Cal (California's medical assistance program) before receiving treatment—except in cases of emergency or contagious disease. A coalition of health care workers, labor unions, community organizations and religious groups is fighting the supervisors' decision in California Superior Court because it feels the policy will keep thousands of undocumented work-

ers from receiving health care.

Illegal aliens will not apply for Medi-Cal, the coalition charges, because such applications are routinely processed through the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service as part of that agency's efforts to find and deport them. The new policy would be unfair, the group says, because undocumented aliens pay for more than their share of social services through taxes on income, sales and gasoline. (Mexican sociologist Jorge Bustamante has suggested that the proper term for Mexican immigrants in the U.S. should be "undocumented taxpayer.")

The Los Angeles supervisors claim the change is a necessary measure to cut costs in a health care system facing deterioration as a result of impending federal and state cuts in health care funds that support county services.

The county is currently under a restraining order prohibiting it from implementing the new policy pending the outcome of the lawsuit. The lawsuit charges that the new policy is illegal because it violates state statutes that require counties to take care of indigents.

Though almost all states require counties and other local governments to provide health care for indigent residents, according to Geraldine Dallek of the National Health Law Program, the Los Angeles case represents the first time an attempt has been made to establish the right of undocumented aliens to receive care under such statutes.

The Board of Supervisors' decision is one of the most hotly debated issues in Los Angeles this year. Even the Los Angeles County Grand Jury, in an unusual step, urged the Board of Supervisors to rescind their decision and, instead, step up efforts to obtain more federal aid for the health care of undocumented aliens.

Yet this approach, say health care specialists, is likely to fail—particularly in light of overall health care cuts already proposed by the Reagan administration. The National Association of Community Health Centers, for instance, estimates that almost half of the nation's community and migrant health centers will be forced to close if Reagan administration proposals pass.

Dr. Shirley Fanin, chief of communicable diseases for Los Angeles, said that in some respects Los Angeles is acquiring the health profile of a developing rather than a developed country. She said the problem will grow worse if the new policy adopted by the Board of Supervisors is implemented.

—Bill Kenkelen



# IN THE NATION

## OSHA

# Court saves health standard—for now

By James Crawford

BOSTON

**N**EW LEGISLATIVE ASSAULTS on health and safety regulation are expected in the wake of the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on cotton dust. Prior to the June 17 ruling the Reagan White House saw little reason to dismantle the body of OSHA law if it could instead dismantle the agency itself by administrative means. Enforcement could be cut back, worker education programs censored, and standards eased—all without a single congressional hearing.

But now the administration has lost its preferred weapon for curbing "excessive" protection of workers on the job; according to the high court ruling, "cost-benefit analysis" can no longer be invoked to justify weak regulations for toxic chemicals and harmful physical agents. Upholding OSHA's 1978 standard for cotton dust levels, a 5-to-3 majority said that Congress had already "defined the basic relationship between costs and benefits" when it passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970. That relationship "plac[es] the 'benefit' of worker health above all other considerations" except the feasibility of achieving that benefit.

The ruling will no doubt slow down the Reagan Labor Department's rollback of OSHA protections. That process was already well under way, with several major standards—including lead, noise and carcinogens—coming under the cost-benefit knife.

Adding force to the Supreme Court's decision is the justices' direct rebuff of the White House. In an unprecedented move, the Justice Department had intervened after the case had been heard, going to the court on March 27 to ask that is not to rule on cotton dust. Because the administration planned to review the standard in light of cost-benefit analysis, said the government lawyers, any decision would be "tantamount to an advisory opinion."

The line of argument has been abandoned since the June 17 ruling. Some industry spokespeople maintained that the court did not explicitly preclude cost-benefit. But Timothy Ryan, head solicitor at the Labor Department, concedes that the procedure "probably isn't acceptable" for setting health standards. (For safety standards the issue was left open.)

Still, the administration has not given up on cost-benefit analysis. "We still contend it is a useful tool in the regulatory area," said Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan in a recent press briefing. He hinted that Congress may soon be asked to restore its legality by amending the OSHAct.

### Fast relief?

Already, "regulatory relief" legislation introduced in April by Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.) (and cosponsored by 78 other senators) would require any federal regulation costs of more than \$100 million to be balanced against benefits. But as currently written, the bill (S.1080) would not override existing laws that disallow cost-benefit analysis—a significant restriction in light of the cotton dust decision. The bill's bipartisan consensus will likely evaporate as conservatives try to remove that restriction and liberals try to retain it.

Meanwhile the White House has its own objections to the Laxalt bill, which

would strip the Office of Management and Budget of any discretion about how and when to use cost-benefit. Such an infringement of executive authority—though promoted by Reagan campaign advisors last fall—makes little sense to an administration in power.

Changes in the OSHAct, while more convenient for the White House, may also prove problematic. The Supreme Court's reading of the Act does not prevent the law from being changed. But that process becomes politically more sensitive now that the court has endorsed "the pre-eminent value [of]...a safe and healthful working environment."

But even without changes in the law, the administration intends to exploit what it sees as a loophole in the cotton dust decision. Workers' health, said the court, must be safeguarded "to the extent feasible"—and in considering feasibility OSHA must look at economic factors.

Industry's own cost estimates, of course, can be counted on to "prove" the infeasibility of a proposed standard. When OSHA moved to regulate the carcinogen vinyl chloride in 1975, a study commissioned by plastics manufacturers predicted that compliance would cost \$90 billion. Not only did this estimate turn out to be 300 times too high, but many companies ended up making money.

Still, it is unlikely that "feasibility" can be used as a front for continued cost-benefit analysis. "Feasibility analysis is much more stringent," points out Eric Frumin, health and safety director for the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. While marginal companies may close down rather than comply, a standard must threaten the competitiveness and stability of an entire industry to be judged infeasible on grounds of cost.

Instead of issuing new standards, the administration is expected to continue trying to rewrite those already on the books with an eye to shifting the regulatory focus from workplace to worker.

Following the cotton dust decision, Thorne Auchter, the new head of OSHA, announced that "cost-effectiveness studies" may be needed "to determine what particular method should be used to achieve the required levels of protection." In other words, OSHA may require workers to wear respirators instead of requiring management to install expensive ventilation systems. Such a move

would reverse the agency's past policy of favoring engineering controls. The cotton dust standard, for example, requires dust masks to be phased out by 1984, the textile industry's deadline for controlling dust levels mechanically.

Labor plans to oppose such shifts away from engineering controls, and though the recent court ruling does not speak directly to this question, in general the decision will make it easier for workers and unions to challenge weak standards and inadequate controls when cost has been a factor in rejecting stronger measures. Peg Seminario of the AFL-CIO's health and safety staff calls the ruling "probably the biggest legal victory we've ever had," but cautions that a great deal hinges on enforcement. "It's very tough to force OSHA to enforce the law," she says, adding that "the majority of textile workers are in state plan states," where OSHA has delegated its authority. (Since Reagan took office, federal supervision of these state OSHA programs has been cut back sharply, with predictable results.)

The cotton dust decision also may have a dampening effect on industry's challenges to OSHA citations, according to attorneys litigating job safety and health cases. Since the Supreme Court's *Barlow* decision in 1978—which ruled

that warrantless workplace inspections violate Fourth Amendment guarantees against "unreasonable search and seizure"—OSHA has been increasingly restricted by the federal judiciary. As a result, employers have been encouraged to contest obvious violations and stonewall on correcting hazards.

And in ruling last year that OSHA had not proven a "significant risk" that would justify its standard for benzene, the high court opened a Pandora's Box of new litigation by industry. The vagueness of the "significant risk" concept has encouraged its application in virtually any kind of challenge to OSHA. (The court's rejection of cost-benefit analysis does not negate this precedent.)

Reagan appointments to the court could, of course, change the picture, though Justice Potter Stewart's departure will be no blow to workers' rights. Stewart not only dissented on cotton dust, but also authored last year's muddled masterpiece on significant risk. Of greater concern to health and safety advocates is the fact that the most consistent supporters on the court—Brennan, Marshall and Blackmun—are all in their 70s and nearing retirement.

James Crawford is an editor of *Survival Kit*, a job health and safety newsletter in Boston.



The existing rules require that dust masks be phased out by 1984, the textile industry's deadline for installing ventilation systems.

## OSHA's success is no accident

According to Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, passed in 1970, "has not produced demonstrable improvements in the safety of workers." Hatch's claims, which are echoed in the White House and the Labor Department, are challenged by Ruth Ruttenberg and Randall Hudgins in a new study, *Occupational Safety and Health in the Chemical Industry*, published by the Council on Economic Priorities (CEP).

The CEP study is based on an analysis of 12,000 inspections conducted by OSHA in the chemical industry, which is among the most hazardous in the country. Ruttenberg and Hudgins found that between 1972 and 1979 there was a 23 percent drop in the rate of recorded injuries and illnesses of chemical industry workers. "Such a decline repre-

sents approximately 88,000 fewer injuries during the period," they conclude.

Because of a refusal to increase OSHA's inspection staff and because of corporate hostility to the agency, routine plant inspections have been de-emphasized. Instead, inspections have occurred only in cases of accidents or worker complaints. But the CEP study found that the frequency of accident-prompted inspections was in inverse proportion to the frequency of general inspections. Offices in Dover, Delaware, for instance, that conducted routine general inspections had a dramatically lower number of accident inspections. "This suggests that the existence of any active program for general schedule inspections has a leveraging effect and does indeed prevent accidents," the authors argue.

The authors also found that employees were much more likely to exercise

their rights to "walkaround" with inspectors in unionized plants and that inspectors in these plants most often found health and safety violations in this way. "Walkaround and its relationship to unionized plants may, in part, explain why more serious violations are found in organized plants—not because they are inherently more dangerous, but because employee participation in the inspection process is an important part of a total and complete inspection."

The CEP study estimates that the cost of OSHA compliance for the eight largest chemical companies was about \$140 per employee or 1.3 percent of the industry's total invested capital. From 1971 to 1976, productivity in the chemical industry increased an average of 7.8 percent a year, up from 7.4 percent a year from 1966 to 1971. This would seem to suggest that OSHA compliance did not have a deleterious effect on the company's economic performance.

—John Judis



## MASSACHUSETTS

## Prop 2½ sparks occupations

By Jerome Rubin

BOSTON

**A**FTER PASSING BY A HEALTHY margin last fall, Proposition 2½, Massachusetts' property tax cutting measure, was hailed by its proponents as a major blow against "big government" and runaway social spending. But the public outcry against recent 2½-inspired service cuts shows the event to be something much more. Even in communities that voted solidly for the measure, militant direct action against the cutbacks has reached a level previously unknown in Massachusetts' politics and entirely unexpected by state and local officials.

Proposition 2½ was passed by voters fed up with one of the highest levels of property taxation in the nation. Simply, Proposition 2½ says that the total property taxes charged by any city or town cannot exceed 2½ percent of the full cash value of that community's property. The new law mandates that communities now charging more than 2½ percent must reduce their total property tax collection by 15 percent on July 1, 1981, and continue cutting property taxes by 15 percent a year until the 2½ percent mark is reached.

In the first fiscal year (July 1981-June 1982) the total cuts for the state will be \$332 million. While some suburban and rural towns are already below 2½ percent, cities like Boston, Salem and Springfield may require two to four years of annual tax cuts to comply with the law. Many cities in the Boston area are being forced to cut their current budgets by 15 to 20 percent from last year's levels. With current inflation of 11 percent boosting the actual cuts even higher, these cities face drastic reductions in service this year and even more troubling choices in fiscal 1982.



Charlestown, the first Boston neighborhood to occupy a Firehouse, dubbed it "People's Firehouse Number 2" in deference to an earlier action in Brooklyn, N. Y.

and set up what now looks like a dormitory and day-care center. The Salem Willows group—fire fighters and their wives, retired residents and children—thus become the sixth group to occupy a fire house in the Boston area this year.

"People came out of the woodwork when they heard this station was closing," said Rose Bouchard, a leader of the Salem group. With no prior political experience Bouchard was both flattered and scared when asked by her neighbors to be the spokesperson for Salem's People's Fire House Number 6, as the station came to be called. But she brought her five children down to the station, set up house amidst the trucks and equipment and is now answering reporters' questions, writing leaflets and leading daily roving pickets.

Charlestown is a Boston neighborhood

next day two leaders from the People's Fire House flew to Boston to show a film documenting their occupation and give some advice.

"We copied what the Brooklyn people did, step by step," explained firefighter Henry Hickey. "They had a spokesman and so did we. They explained how you had to hold the trucks hostage so they couldn't be transferred, so that's exactly what we did. We set up beds, kitchens and all right in the station." In deference to the Brooklyn organization, the Charlestown station was renamed People's Firehouse Number 2. Today it still bears that name.

Official reactions to the Charlestown occupation were mixed. The City made no effort to remove the occupiers and some officials even voiced muted support. But, the direct action tactics were criticized, and some officials referred to the group as "holdovers from forced busing." (A reference to the sometimes violent reactions of all-white Charlestown to school desegregation.) As Judy Hickey explained, she had nothing to do with the busing protests but had seen the effects of rampant arson as a child and felt that fire protection was a service not to be tampered with.

From Charlestown, the building occupations spread to South Boston and East Boston, where closed neighborhood police stations were taken over by residents. In East Boston hundreds of residents turned out to blockade the toll-booth plaza of the Sumner-Callahan Tunnel, a major Boston artery.

Next, residents of Jamaica Plain, another Boston neighborhood that had already seen one police station close, heard rumors that their fire station was going to shut down. The station, located in a dense residential area and surrounded by a number of nursing homes, was dilapidated and slated for renovation this summer. When residents heard the deputy fire chief suggest that the station would close, they decided to sit-in at the station and blockade the Jamaica Way, a major road.

"I'm very, very angry," said Michelle Frost, a participant in the demonstrations. "If I have to lay across the front of the station myself I will. They won't move those trucks out. I have two kids and those elderly in the homes won't be able to get out. It makes me shudder."

As this article was being written, fire stations in Beverly and Somerville were occupied by neighborhood residents.

#### Who's in charge?

Though the fire station occupations have been well organized, there has been remarkably little formal coordination between the various groups, and only recently have the occupiers begun to exchange advice and support. Two days after the Salem occupation residents of Malden came by, followed the next day by a contingent from Charlestown. A

representative from People's Fire House Number 2 in Charlestown visited residents in Somerville and Beverly and Salem occupiers are discussing a joint effort to block traffic on the major artery connecting the two cities.

Though some officials have pointed an accusing finger at "outside organizations," the occupiers for the most part have been community residents with no particular affiliation. Unlike the actions in other neighborhoods, the Jamaica Plain protests were organized in part by members and staff of Massachusetts Fair Share, a statewide citizens organization. But in late May, when the Peoples Fire House Number 5 was established in Malden, a city just outside Boston, local Fair Share members and staff who attempted to assist the occupiers were rebuffed. Leaders of the occupation, who some members of the community claim were "interested in political gain," refused to allow the participation of a Fair Share organizer and accused Fair Share members of taking over the occupation. Most residents were open to Fair Share participation and a serious split developed in the Malden People's Fire House that eventually led to a premature settlement and only a partial victory there.

Though the Massachusetts Fire Fighters Association (AFL-CIO) has not taken a position on the occupations, union members in the affected cities have lent quiet support. Fear of upsetting already strained labor relations has prevented more active support from the union locals but individual members have worked with occupiers.

#### The reign of confusion.

Most city officials are responding to the occupations with claims that the residents voted for proposition 2½ and they are only carrying out that mandate. While it is true that proposition 2½ passed in Boston, Salem, Malden, Beverly and Somerville, the residents occupying their fire stations now have less than kind words for the tax-cutting measure.

"The Mayor said to me, Rose, 63 percent of the people voted for 2½ and now they got it," lamented Mrs. Bouchard. "I said what the people are telling me is that if it was stated that their safety, fire and police would go, they wouldn't have voted for it. I didn't vote for it myself because it was too complicated to understand."

Michelle Frost concurred. "I didn't vote for 2½. It should have been more specific. There was too much room for doubt. But, I suppose it could have been a good thing. There is some fat, but they shouldn't cut the main services."

It is difficult to predict how cities will cope with 2½ over the next few years. So far, the building occupations have proven largely successful. Charlestown got its station back, South Boston and East Boston got their police stations re-opened, Malden got half of its station's capacity restored, and Salem officials are currently considering re-opening Engine 6.

But it has been rumored that cities may renege on their agreements with occupying residents. Already there are signs that the Jamaica Plain station will never be renovated and that its engines will be moved to another location. Members of People's Firehouses who called off their occupa-

Continued on page 22



The engine was the most valuable hostage at People's Fire House Number 2.

As one Boston city official told me, once they've gotten through the alleged "fat" this year there may not even be any "meat" to cut next year.

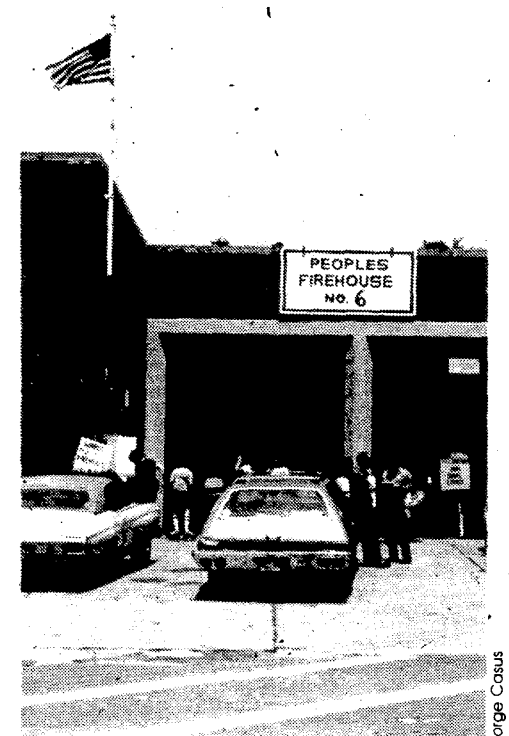
The cuts in some cities have been staggering. Kevin White's initial budget proposal of \$122 million—down 44 percent from last year—entails nearly 2,000 city layoffs. All of Boston's "little city halls," a source of local services, have been forced to close and many neighborhoods are slated to lose their police and fire stations.

Salem, a North Shore community known primarily as a tourist haven, was forced to cut its budget this year by 17 percent. This meant the loss of 82 city employees, including 22 teachers, 12 public works employees, 12 policemen, and eight fire fighters. Budget cuts also forced the city to end school busing entirely and close down one fire station.

Salem residents have responded with the anger and spontaneous protest that are becoming more and more common in previously quiet blue-collar neighborhoods. Early in the morning of June 6, 30 residents of the Salem Willows neighborhood walked into their local fire house, chained down the foam pumper, tied a rope in front of the double doors

of 15,000 separated from the rest of the city by the Charles River. Like other Boston neighborhoods it is fiercely independent and in part relies on its own neighborhood services, including fire protection. When Judy Hickey, the wife of a Boston fire-fighter and a member of a fire-fighters' wives group, heard that Boston Mayor Kevin White was planning to close her neighborhood fire station, she was outraged. Not certain exactly what to do, she and 10 other local women walked into the firehouse at 7:30 a.m. on May 3 and with some trepidation told the fire-fighters that they were not leaving the firehouse until the city changed its position. The bewildered captain called in to Boston for advice and was told to leave the women alone. By nightfall, there were more than 50 residents in the station, holding the valuable engine hostage and prepared to stay indefinitely.

At a hastily called community meeting on the second night of the occupation, a Boston fireman and a friend of the Hick-eyes mentioned that he knew of a group in Brooklyn that had done something similar last year. That night the Charlestown occupiers called Brooklyn, and the



People's Fire House Number 6 in Salem



## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## The policy on Africa leaks out

By Kevin Danaher

WASHINGTON

**T**HE PROBLEM WITH REAGAN is that all he knows about southern Africa is that he's on the side of the whites." The words of a disgruntled Democrat? Or perhaps an African guerrilla leader? Unfortunately not—the above confession was made by one of Ronald Reagan's top Africa advisers in a pre-election interview.

Judging from the contents of secret documents detailing the new U.S. strategy for southern Africa, President Reagan is now intent on turning his prejudices into policy. The documents were leaked in late May to TransAfrica, a Washington-based black lobby for Africa and the Caribbean. As executive director of TransAfrica, Randall Robinson, told *In These Times*, "These documents prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Reagan administration is clearly against black interests in Africa."

The secret memoranda stress the linked themes of 1) movement toward an "internationally acceptable settlement in Namibia," 2) efforts "to foreclose opportunities for growth of Soviet influence in southern Africa" and 3) "greater acceptance of south Africa within the global framework of western security."

## One memo urges U.S. officials to lie about the linkage between demands on Angola and a Namibia solution.

The leaking of the policy documents, most likely by a foreign service officer in the Africa section of the State Department, is a clear sign of internal opposition to Reagan's policies. The administration made no attempt to deny the authenticity of the documents, and the State Department, calling the leak "contemptible and reprehensible," ordered an investigation to find the culprit.

On the question of Namibia, one policy paper links a settlement in that country to the pullout of Cuban troops from Angola and a demand for the ruling MPLA to bring Jonas Savimbi's UNITA movement into the government. The document acknowledges that these are outrageous demands by suggesting that American officials lie about the linkage between a Namibian settlement and the demands on Angola: "We would insist that these are unrelated, but in fact they would be mutually reinforcing, parallel tracks of an overall strategy."

The general tone of the documents is arrogant: "African leaders would have no basis for resisting the Namibia-Angola linkage once they are made to realize that they can only get a Namibia settlement through us." They are also threatening: American recognition of Angola is "out unless the Cubans leave and they [the Angolan government] cut a deal with Savimbi...if they won't play, we have other options."

One of the leaked memos reports in detail on the mid-April meetings in Pretoria between assistant secretary of state for African affairs Chester Crocker, South African foreign minister P.W. Botha and defense minister Magnus Malan. The memo says that "SAG [South African government] sees Savimbi in Angola as buffer for Namibia. Having supported him this far, it would damage SAG honor if Savimbi is harmed." Crocker responded to this position by arguing that he sees

"no prospect of military victory for UNITA" but that Savimbi's inclusion in the Angolan government could be achieved "by playing on divisions in MPLA." The State Department officials believe Savimbi could be forced to go along with U.S. plans because he is dependent on aid from "parties we can directly influence" (most likely a reference to Morocco and Saudi Arabia, as well as South Africa).

Quotes from the eight-page memo on the Pretoria meetings provides several insights into the thinking of South African officials.

•They "doubted whether, given domestic pressures and views of such African states as Nigeria, U.S. could continue any policy favorable to South Africa that would not provoke constant criticism."

•Botha "said he is suspicious of U.S.

State Department memos related to Crocker's April meetings with the "Contact Group" (Britain, Canada, France and West Germany) and with other African leaders reveal that, "On Namibia, Crocker found the Front Line states and Nigeria rhetorically unyielding in their insistence that the only acceptable solution to the problem was the immediate implementation of an unchanged UNSC [United Nations Security Council Resolution] 435, to be brought about by western pressure on South Africa."

At the Contact Group meeting in London, the five West European countries were "substantially in agreement" that UN Resolution 435 provides a "solid basis" for a settlement but that "constitutional arrangements" should be tacked on. They agreed that "we should describe

Alexander Haig with South African foreign minister Roelof Botha.



## In exchange for closer ties, the Reagan team asks only that South Africa maintain a pretense of reform.

our efforts as attempts to 'compliment' rather than to 'change' 435."

The "Soviet threat" is a major theme of all the leaked documents. In his Pretoria meetings with P.W. Botha, Crocker "stressed that top U.S. priority is to stop Soviet encroachment in Africa." A memo to Haig from Crocker advises the secretary of state to assure South African officials that "A Russian flag in Windhoek is as unacceptable to us as it is to you."

### "Your best shot."

But as Crocker learned on his trip to Africa in April, leaders of black Africa see the apartheid regime, not the Soviets, as the major threat to peace in southern

Africa. The documents acknowledge Pretoria's regional aggression but oppose it on strategic rather than humanitarian grounds: "We cannot afford to give them [South African government] a blank check regionally...SAG intransigence and violent adventures will expand Soviet opportunities and reduce western leverage in Africa."

Central to the Reagan team's "constructive engagement" strategy is the claim that Prime Minister P.W. Botha's government is seriously committed to reforming apartheid. In Crocker's meetings with P.W. Botha he told the South African foreign minister: "U.S. ability to develop full relations with SAG depends on success of Prime Minister Botha's program and extent to which it is seen as broadening SAG's domestic support." At another point Crocker instructs Haig to tell the South Africans: "We can cooperate with a society undergoing constructive change. Your government's explicit commitment in this direction will enable us to work with you. You should also recognize that this period represents your best shot."

If Pretoria will comply with Washington's request for more window-dressing alterations in the superficial aspects of

apartheid, the Reaganites will attempt to return South Africa "to a place within the regional framework of western security interests," starting with "small but concrete steps such as the normalization of our military attaché relationship." To lead the South Africans on like this without prior consultation with NATO allies reveals just how adventurist the Reagan team can be.

The May 17 issue of the South Africa *Sunday Tribune* reported that following the Haig-Botha talks, General Vernon Walters, a former deputy chief of the CIA and a Reagan troubleshooter, was "starting exploratory talks on the formation of a South Atlantic Treaty Organization that would include the armed forces of South Africa and South American dictatorships."

Whether or not the administration can pull off such a realignment is another matter. As one veteran South African freedom-fighter and poet remarked, quoting an old Sesotho proverb: "E shoang e ea raharaha"—"A dying bull kicks the hardest."

Kevin Danaher, who teaches public policy and government at American University, is a visiting fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies.

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# Workers

Continued from page 3

ber Chicago APWU local, said. "Many people wouldn't hesitate this time. I think it has to do with all the things happening—the Reagan win, the Reagan cuts. If the cost-of-living is tampered with, there will be no keeping them in."

## Capping the COLA.

Bolger has already indicated that he wants to tamper with the cost-of-living allowance (COLA), specifically by setting a limit (or "cap") on how much workers can receive over the life of the contract. In 1978 workers rejected the contract in large part because of a limit of \$1,518 on COLA payments that the arbitrator later removed. Since workers actually received \$3,619 in COLA payments over the past three years, accepting that cap would have set them back by more than \$2,000. (The average postal worker now makes nearly \$20,000 a year in base salary and can count on the COLA to recover about two-thirds of income lost to inflation.)

Postal union negotiators are trying to avoid the inflamed confrontation of the air traffic controllers by soberly making a case for their economic demands. They point to the 5.5 percent increase in productivity in the postal service during the past year (and an average of 2.7 percent annual increase in productivity since the postal service was organized in 1970). Consequently, the union bargainers argue, postal workers are justified in asking for more than the annual 3 percent improvement adjustments included in the past contract.

Comparing postal workers wage increases to price inflation and to pay increases won by other unions, the APWU and NALC argue that postal workers have not been overpaid and actually need an improved formula for calculating the

cost of living. They base their monetary demands on research by independent consultant Dr. Joel Topkin, who reported that since 1969 postal wages have increased 163.3 percent, compared to a nearly identical 161.6 percent for all union contracts covering more than 1,000 workers.

During the past three years, Topkin said, the consumer price index increased 39.1 percent. Even excluding crude oil increases, mortgage rates and farm prices, prices rose by 34.4 percent. But postal wages increased only 31.9 percent. Therefore, the unions argue, postal workers are entitled to a 2.7 percent first year "catch-up" in addition to cost-of-living payments that provide one cent for each 0.25 to 0.3 increase in the CPI.

Bolger can be expected to argue that the Reagan administration's slash in the subsidy to the Postal Service and the Postal Rate Commission's refusal of a 20 cent first class rate make it impossible for the Postal Service to pay substantial increases or live with the unpredictable costs of wage inflation.

The toughest issue besides cost-of-living protection could be job security. For decades the postal work force expanded steadily, and management was not bothered by a 1971 no-layoff guarantee in the contract. But mechanization during the past decade permitted some cutbacks in employment, and numerous new technologies and policies—electronic mail, nine-digit zip codes, five-day delivery, reduction in the number of post offices—could dramatically reduce postal ser-

vice employment in coming years.

In 1978 the arbitrator modified the no-layoff clause. Now workers hired after Sept. 15, 1978, must work six years continuously to be protected against lay-off. The unions want at a minimum to reduce the period before coverage and move up the date of applicability to 1981. But Bolger would like even greater freedom in laying off employees.

The death of several postal workers in recent years, especially at the bulk mail centers that are generally more industrial and more militant than other parts of the Postal Service, has pushed safety to the forefront. Although the overall safety statistics for the Postal Service have improved in the past three years, the current rate of lost-workday injuries is double the rate for industry as a whole, according to the Postal Service. The Postal Service accounts for one-fifth of all hours worked by federal employees, yet also accounts for 31 percent of injuries and 38 percent of lost-time accidents.

The unions want workers to be able to refuse to do unsafe work, greater union influence in and more power for union-management safety committees and easier access to postal facilities by federal OSHA inspectors.

Local union officials complain that during the past few years Postal Service management has intensified petty harassment and discipline and provoked a vast number of grievances that are only slowly settled at the highest level. They want workers to stay on the job until discipline

cases are resolved (much as they did when the post office was under civil service). They also want a provision that management defaults on a grievance if it responds too slowly.

The unions are also demanding an end to mandatory overtime and a reduction in the number of casual and part-time employees.

Postmaster General Bolger is known as a hardline, anti-union negotiator in labor circles. He angered union officials this spring by delaying the start of talks by nearly two months as he appealed to the National Labor Relations Board to establish whether there was one bargaining agent for the workers. Partly Bolger took advantage of efforts by the APWU to win over members of the Mailhandlers, a division of the Laborers union, and similar representation battles between the Letter Carriers and the Rural Letter Carriers.

Both of the smaller unions, who have more conservative leadership, are negotiating apart from the APWU and NALC, raising the possibility of the Postal Service using them to undermine the more militant big unions.

Undermining worker cost-of-living protection has been high on the corporate agenda for fighting inflation for years. Carter tried to take on government employees, and postal workers in particular, to break labor's defense against erosion of earnings by inflation, and Reagan is at least as deeply committed to the same strategy. Federal workers will receive only a 4.8 percent pay raise later this year in Reagan's plans. But the Reagan budget cuts will also bring budgetary pressures and the threat of unemployment to bear on wages. Leyden says, for example, that some 60,000 to 80,000 teachers may lose their jobs this fall as a result of the cuts.

"There's going to be some very, very difficult collective bargaining this year," Leyden says. "I don't think people realize the impact of Reaganomics." But the postal workers may soon get a lesson, or else give one in return.

rose to prominence through the militant movements of the 1970s. Their close relationship may facilitate a merger. Both unions have also tried to win members of the smaller Rural Letter Carriers and the Mailhandlers, a division of the Laborers, to their unions.

## Preserving the public role.

The introduction of electronic message systems, however, raises political issues that go beyond collective bargaining and union organization. Increasingly the public postal corporation and the private telephone, telegraph and other communications companies will be placed in direct competition. The New Right, backed by powerful corporate interests, would like virtually to dismantle the post office and unleash private industry to run America's communications, preferably free of unions.

There are compelling reasons of public interest to protect and expand the role of the post office in the country's communications. Despite the popular reputation, the post office actually performs well its constitutional mandate to provide an effective and secure mail system accessible to all Americans. Its productivity, measured in pieces of mail per employee, is the highest in the world and almost 50 percent higher than the next country, Japan. Its method of protecting privacy is at least open to congressional scrutiny. And postal workers, who are disproportionately from minorities, have won above-average pay, benefits and pensions over the years.

As the new communications technology is introduced, imaginative labor and political leadership could insure a broader communications system under public control that maintains hundreds of thousands of skilled jobs. Yet there is also the threat of severely crippling the Postal Service, disrupting its workforce and turning over even more of the nation's means of communications to deregulated corporate barons.

Paul D. Roose is area steward of Branch 1111 of the National Association of Letter Carriers in the San Francisco Bay Area of California.

# Mail

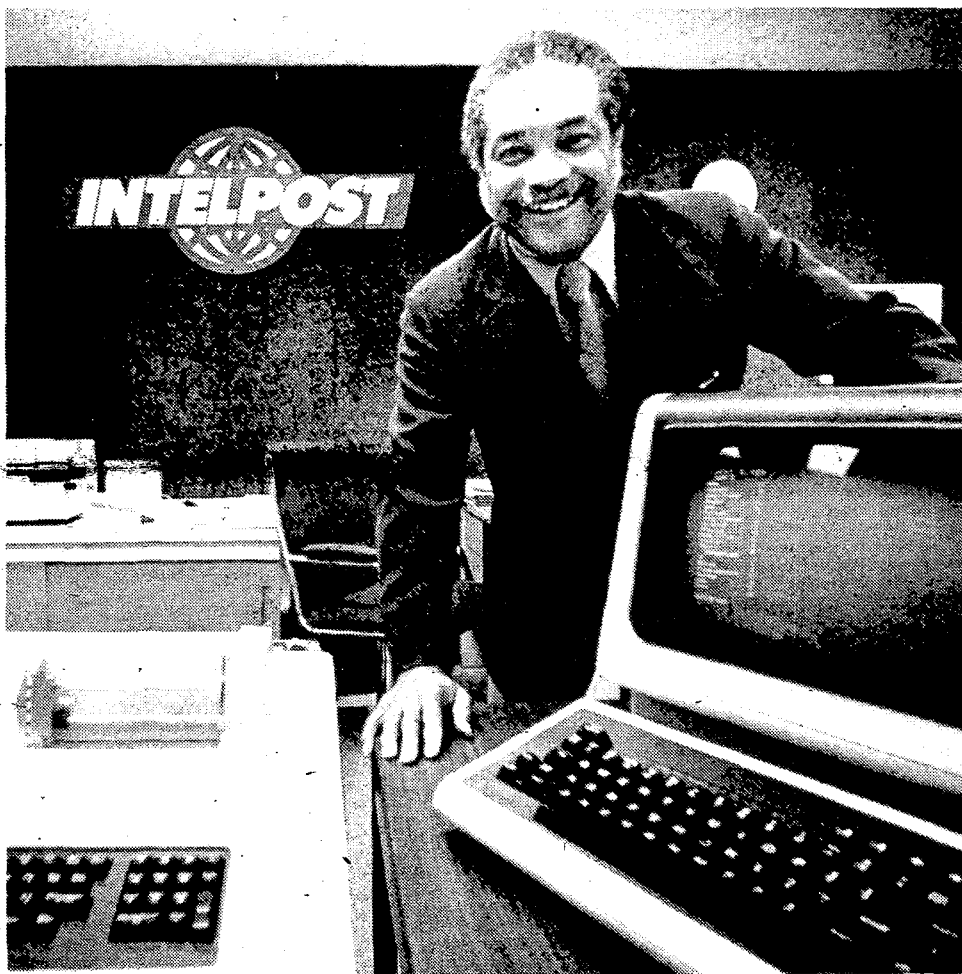
Continued from page 3

with declining mail volume and pressure from Congress, the Postal Service commissioned a study by RCA. The study reported in 1978 that EMS could cut delivery costs one-third, could deliver one-third of all letter mail by 1990, and would require investment only in high-speed facsimile printes and "envelopers."

The Postal Service, backed by postal unions, some magazine publishers and third-class mailers, wants to provide electronic mail service, but both the private communications industry, ranging from mammoth AT&T to small, aggressive firms such as Graphnet, and the Federal Communications Commission are opposed.

The Postal Service ran into varied opposition when it proposed a Generation II type of service, E-COM, in 1978. It would amount to a high-volume, low-cost mailgram under Postal Service control, though Western Union would be contracted to transmit the electronic signals. The FCC intervened to deny Western Union the right to provide the service as contractor. Even the Postal Rate Commission, which is required to review any rate or mail classification proposals of the Postal Service, wrote a counter-proposal that reduced postal service control over E-COM and made the program "experimental" with a fixed termination date.

The battle continues, as it will undoubtedly for years. Although the Postal Service "reluctantly" accepted the Postal Rate Commission plan last August when it announced E-COM, it vowed to challenge aspects of it in court. The Carter administration at first favored a large Postal Service role in electronic message systems, but last year urged the Postal Service to accept the weaker alternative from the rate commission. Reagan's friends in the Heritage Foundation proposed earlier this year that the Postal Service be excluded from any significant role in EMS. Reagan is likely to adopt



The Postal Service has already launched pilot programs in international electronic transmission.

this policy and to allow a greater role for private companies in traditional message delivery.

## Keeping the unions in the picture.

The four postal unions believe that if the Postal Service does not get a healthy share of the EMS market the Service will be wrecked—mail diverted to new channels, productivity undermined, rates forced upwards and jobs lost. Not surprisingly, Glen Watts, president of the Communications Workers, which represents most of the nation's phone workers, wrote to then-President Carter that his union has been "historically opposed to government operation of any form of business that can and will be operated by private industry."

But if the postal unions succeed in helping the Postal Service carve out the largest possible slice of electronic mail, they will then face even more difficult issues. The first two generations of EMS will wipe out much of the manual and electro-mechanical sorting of mail that is the cornerstone of clerk craft work. Generation II direct transmission from one terminal to another threatens the letter carriers as well. The jobs created through EMS will be for computer technicians, home terminal installers and mechanics and other electronic technicians.

The unions could try to save jobs

through a shorter work week and protect existing workers through retraining requirements. Job quality could be protected through contractually-guaranteed union input into how technology will be introduced and used and how work will be organized. Without such protection, postal management would probably prefer to hire a few supervisory computer experts and thousands of low-paid button-pushers rather than retrain letter carriers and mail clerks to perform skilled electronics jobs at higher wages.

In order to protect themselves, the postal unions may also have to organize private sector workers if private delivery and electronic message companies continue to flourish. So far the unions are committed to their traditional craft and jurisdiction. The letter carriers overwhelmingly rejected a constitutional amendment at their 1980 convention that would have allowed organizing private-sector workers.

The changes in work organization will also undermine the craft lines in the Postal Service and lead to more jurisdictional squabbling unless there is a move towards unity. The American Postal Workers Union and the National Association of Letter Carriers, the two major unions, have discussed merger as recently as last year. The two new presidents of the unions are both from New York and



# IN THE WORLD

## IRAN



The Islamic Republican Party, which controls radio and TV, can mobilize the urban poor with religious rhetoric.

# The mullahs have the reins of power

By Fred Halliday

LONDON

THE DETONATION OF EXPLOSIVES in the headquarters of the Islamic Republican Party on the night of June 28 must count as the most successful bombing in the history of underground opposition. The famous 17th-century British Catholic conspirator Guy Fawkes failed in his attempt to block the House of Commons, and he has been a figure of fun ever since. In 1925 the left communist faction in Bulgaria blew up Sofia Cathedral while the king and his entire government attended a religious service, but all those dignitaries escaped alive. This time, more than 17 leading members of the ruling Islamic Republican Party's central committee, including Ayatollah Beheshti, were slain.

The IRP has been able to replace the personnel killed and has insisted on holding the presidential elections to replace Bani-Sadr in late July. It has restored an appearance of Islamic business as usual, masked somewhat by the natural slowdown of the summer heat and the fasting month of Ramadan.

But the bombing nevertheless marks an important change in the climate in Iran. It is the first time the opposition has hit back at the regime, and the event has broken the veneer of invincibility that up until now has been so important to the ruling clerics.

The regime has responded with stepped up oppression. More than 100 executions took place in the first 10 days after the bombing, and more can be expected; the IRP does not intend to let the initiative slip from its grasp. For his part, Bani-Sadr is aware that to leave the country is to risk discrediting himself, and he is holed up in the mountains of west Iran. He has no radio with which to reach the people and no political organization of his own. He is like the 12th Imam, whom Shi'ite Moslems believe disappeared in the 9th century and will at some time reappear—a figure of loyalty, but without

any direct relation to the population.

Yet despite the bombing, the basic elements of the conflict that drove Bani-Sadr from office remain. The ex-president's fundamental dispute with his opponents in the Islamic Republican Party hinged on a single issue: power in post-revolutionary Iran, and what has, till now, been the key to that power, the ear of Ayatollah Khomeini.

The conflict has an ideological aspect: it is a dispute about what kind of Islamic Republic should be created, and in particular about what the role of the clergy in it should be. The thousands of mullahs who now run the Islamic Republican Party and the local "committees" want to see their position confirmed in advance of the inevitable departure of Khomeini from the scene. Bani-Sadr is a devout Muslim and a somewhat credulous supporter of the idea that a socio-economic

program for Iran can be derived from Muslim principles; but he nonetheless opposed the clergy, who he saw as ignorant, and, in the end, liable to discredit his religion.

The social dimensions of the clash have been more complex. The mullahs have been able to mobilize large numbers of urban poor against the secular forces and against those who want Islam without clerical domination. The ethnic minorities, secular parties, educated youth, middle classes and foreign-educated intelligentsia have all been attacked in the name of this popular Islam. Yet in material terms the mullahs have offered nothing to the poor, whose standard of living has continued to fall since the revolution and who have been sustained only by wordy promises and occasional handouts.

In their bid for power the clergy has consistently built up the instruments whereby it can control the state. Mullahs have been assigned to key positions in the ministries and in the armed forces. A massive armed following of up to 100,000—paid by the mullahs—has been recruited from unemployed youth. The militias of the local committees and the armed Islamic Guards have now been joined by a third force, the Basij, or mobilization. Formed originally in the days of the hostage crisis to ward off an American invasion, the Basij is now under the control of the Islamic Republic Party.

The IRP also controls the main instruments of central power in Tehran: the Majlis or Parliament has an IRP majority, and they run the judiciary. One of the issues that brought the crisis to a head in recent weeks was the decision to push through the Law of Qesas, or retribution. This would have instituted the traditional physical punishments of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Apart from the questionable nature of such a penal code, the law was opposed on other grounds, namely its refusal to recognize any role for women or witnesses. Even the one woman deputy in the Majlis, once an IRP supporter, came out against it.

In a country where at most 30 percent of the population can read, enormous political power attaches to those who control the radio and TV; and here again the mullahs have made no mistake. Bani-Sadr's views were systematically excluded from broadcasts, and, accompanied by dramatic bursts of music, the programs of recent weeks have hammered away at themes that still have considerable resonance in the population: the struggle of the true Muslims against false believers, western agents, internal enemies, spreaders of corruption on earth, and those who "wage war on God."

But the center of power remains where it has always been, with the Ayatollah Khomeini. What tipped the balance in this latest conflict was his decision to come out against Bani-Sadr, dismissing him from the presidency and calling on him openly to repent. If Khomeini made Bani-Sadr, bestowing legitimacy on a previously little-known exile, he also unmade him, stripping him of any power

he still had. Bani-Sadr's biggest problem has always been Khomeini: even if he wanted to, he knew that he could not openly defy the Ayatollah. Indeed, to have done so would have been to give his enemies in the IRP precisely the excuse they needed to launch their attack.

Khomeini's grandson has now openly stated that the Ayatollah is a prisoner of the IRP. Bani-Sadr has accused Khomeini's advisers of feeding false information to the old man. But whatever the precise course of their relationship, it was almost impossible for any reconciliation to be brought about. Instead Khomeini has taken the occasion to launch his most open attack yet on the secular nationalists who draw their inspiration from Mohammad Mosadeq.

According to Khomeini, Mosadeq failed because he went against the Koran. One of the most striking features of the ideology of the Islamic regime is that, unlike almost all other third world governments, it does not invoke a nationalist history: for the Ayatollah, the only heroes of the past are those of early Islam. The politicians who in past decades opposed the Shah are, if anything, an obstacle to the establishment of a new religious orthodoxy. (The irony, of course, is that it was not Allah but the CIA that erased Mosadeq.)

The mullahs are openly hailing Khomeini as the *bot-shekan*, the idol-smasher: having smashed the Shah, he has now destroyed the Paris-made idol, Bani-Sadr. Yet Bani-Sadr also commands considerable following in the country and the imposition of full IRP control will not be possible without considerable bloodshed.

The major organization of opposition to the mullahs is the radical Islamic Majahidin of the People. The group has been underground for some months, and has launched increasingly strong attacks on the regime's arbitrary arrests, torture and censorship. They have tens of thousands of supporters under arms, and on June 19 they openly called for armed resistance against the IRP, though they do not feel strong enough to launch a full-scale armed struggle. (Most of those executed since June 29 have been Mojahadin.)

But it is difficult to see how the Mojahidin can prevail over the armed followers of the mullahs. The regime has the money to pay its militia, and has shown itself quite willing to imprison and execute on a wide scale. The IRP accuses Bani-Sadr of being a new Pinocchio; but it is they who are reminiscent of the Chilean junta as they fill the Ajmadiyeh football stadium in central Tehran with prisoners. The 15 people shot on the morning of June 20 after demonstrations the previous day had all been in prison for some time. They were killed as a way of terrorizing the population. One of those who died was Said Sultanpur, a prominent poet, long imprisoned by the Shah. He had been arrested at his wedding party two months before on charges of currency speculation.

The secular left has grown substantially  
Continued on page 22

## ISRAEL

# Left voters fell for "lesser evil" logic

By David Mandel

JERUSALEM

THE ISRAELI LABOR PARTY increased its share of the vote in last week's election by some 50 percent over 1977, when it was dramatically thrown out of office after 30 years of uninterrupted rule. It did so by winning most of the centrist middle class that abandoned Labor four years ago but now was alarmed by the fascist inclinations of Menahem Begin's Likud. To a lesser extent, it also won support from Israelis on the left who chose Labor as the lesser of two evils in an attempt to block the right.

But Israel's social-democrats utterly failed to win any significant support from working-class voters in the coun-

Continued on page 22





## CANADA

## Federalist issues split NDP

By Doug Smith

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

**W**HEN CANADA'S NEW Democratic Party held its federal convention in 1979, NDP leader Ed Broadbent was able to boast that the once-powerful Liberal Party was out of "power, policy and Pierre." After more than a decade of rule by Liberal leader Pierre Trudeau, there was at that time a conservative minority government, while the social democratic NDP had nearly doubled its representation in the House of Commons.

At that convention party strategists began mapping out a policy that would allow them to gain the support of disaffected Liberal voters. NDP finance critic

## Broadbent is seen as out of touch with the west.

Bob Rae told left-wing opponents within the party that it was time the NDP did the working people of Canada a favor and got itself elected to government.

But only a few weeks later Pierre Trudeau reversed his decision to retire as Liberal Party leader, stole the NDP's energy policy and used it to regain power with a majority government. In the process the NDP lost rather than gained support in the country's industrial heartland of Ontario.

Trudeau then helped precipitate what may be the biggest internal split in the NDP in its 20-year history when he moved last fall to draft a new constitution for the country without the support of the provincial governments. The fight came to a head at the NDP's federal convention held in Vancouver at the beginning of this month.

Canada was created in 1867 when the British Parliament approved the British North America Act. Since then, the act has served as the country's constitution, and because it is a British law, only the British government has been able to change it. Over the years, there have been numerous amendments made at the request of the Canadian government.

But it has been a long-held goal of many Canadians to have the constitution repatriated to Canada, dispensing with this remnant of a colonial past. Fifty years ago J.S. Woodsworth, one of the founders of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, a forerunner of the NDP, moved in the House of Commons that the BNA act be brought home.

Trudeau's decision to draft a new constitution as well as a "Charter of Rights" without the agreement of the provinces on either content or an amending formula has opened up serious political rifts in the country and in the NDP.

For while philosophically the party has been in favor of a strong central government, it has found its greatest political success on the provincial level. (At present the only NDP government is in Saskatchewan. It is the opposition in two other provinces.) Moreover, its base of strength is in the west, where opposition to Trudeau and all things associated

with him, including the constitution, is strongest.

Many western New Democrats were outraged when party head Ed Broadbent gave immediate support to the proposed constitution. Some felt the unilateral



Western delegates felt Ed Broadbent agreed too readily on the new constitution.

process was completely unacceptable for a federal state. Some believed the Charter of Rights was so riddled with holes as to be worse than no bill at all, while others were angered by the lack of social rights such as the right to strike or the right to a job. And finally, westerners felt it was politically suicidal for the NDP to endorse the Liberal charter so quickly. They pointed to the party's experience of 1972 to 1974, when they propped up a Liberal minority government for two years and were subsequently decimated at the polls for being "in bed with the Liberals."

In early 1981, four federal party representatives from Saskatchewan, including the NDP's constitutional affairs critic, said they would not support the bill. They objected to the process by which it was being repatriated and the veto power that would be given to the Canadian senate, an appointed body populated largely by political hacks. (The NDP has always been in favor of abolishing the Senate.) Allen Blakeney, the NDP premier of Saskatchewan, also announced his opposition to the repatriation process, maintaining that in a federal state it should require a double majority—that is, the support of both the federal government and provinces—to write as important a document as the constitution.

This disagreement has placed the NDP's most powerful provincial delegation squarely in opposition to its federal leadership. Ed Broadbent, who is from Ontario himself, is now seen as out of touch with the thinking of western Canadians—a dangerous position for a party that draws the bulk of its support from the west.

Blakeney and Broadbent met just before the convention to work out a compromise that Blakeney, who gave it only a half-hearted endorsement, was then unable to sell to the Saskatchewan delegates.

Instead, the federal leadership, several provincial leaders and the western MPs clashed in a two-hour debate on the convention floor, with the leadership claiming that the Charter of Rights had been greatly improved and pointing out that the type of unanimity of provincial leaders that Blakeney wanted could never be achieved. In the end Broadbent's position carried by a 20 percent margin. But in Saskatchewan delegates were pleased by the vote, which indicated that about

20 percent of the other delegates had been brought over to their position.

Saskatchewan also took it in the teeth when the party adopted a policy calling for a moratorium on nuclear power development and a ban on exports of uranium. Since the mid-'70s Saskatchewan, under the direction of an NDP government, has been developing large uranium deposits in the north section of the province. Michael Cassidy, the leader of the Ontario NDP, opposed the ban saying it would be tantamount to telling workers in the uranium industry, "the NDP will take away your jobs tomorrow."

row." Nadine Hunt, the president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labor, also spoke against the new policy, saying Saskatchewan workers had investigated the dangers of uranium and were satisfied with the way it was being developed. But Peter Prebble, an anti-nuclear party member from Saskatchewan, pointed out that opposition to uranium development was consistent with the party's foreign policy. He listed countries that have used uranium supplied by Canada, ostensibly for peaceful purposes, to develop nuclear armaments.

The resolution passed, but it is in no way binding on the NDP government in Saskatchewan, and uranium development there will continue.

The party position on NATO and NORAD was also expected to be a contentious issue at the convention. The NDP has been on record since 1969 in favor of withdrawing from both organizations. But in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Broadbent gave full support to many of Carter's foreign policy moves and said the party would have to reconsider its relationship to NATO. Now the election of Ronald Reagan and the arrival of Alexander Haig have again put the more hawk-like members of the party on the defensive. A strong anti-militarist foreign policy was adopted with few dissenting voices.

Though there was no question that Broadbent would be reelected as the party's leader, the support for the Saskatchewan position on the constitution was seen as a sign of disenchantment with the party leadership. Bob Rae, regarded as a possible heir to Broadbent, has been tarred with the same brush, because he too comes from Ontario. Yet there is no obvious western candidate to head the party.

During the constitutional debate, speakers stressed—almost to the point of tedium—that this was a family feud and not one that would leave the party permanently divided. And for most Canadians the constitution is a non-issue, overshadowed by the more than one million unemployed and the continuing spiral of interest rates and inflation. The party leadership now has two years to show it has some understanding of the west and to distance itself from the Liberal Party before the next federal convention is held in Saskatchewan.

Doug Smith reports occasionally on Canadian politics.

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Richard Healey, Co-Chair  
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Committee

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Heidi Tarver, National  
Coordinator of U.S.  
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*Promise of  
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8 p.m. Culture in the '80s

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NAM  
1981



## EUROPE



Garrett Fitzgerald (left) declared the H-block hunger strike his top priority, but his position on Northern Ireland differs little from the out-going Fianna Fail leadership.

## Economy undoes Irish incumbents

By Jack Kurt Jacobsen

**W**HEN AT LAST GARRET Fitzgerald nudged his Fine Gael-Labour coalition into office June 30, the Irish electorate appeared merely to have taken the outgoing Fianna Fail Party—which has ruled all but 10 of the last 49 years—at its wavering word. After capturing an unprecedented 84 of the 144 parliamentary seats in the 1977 election, Jack Lynch, then Fianna Fail prime minister, solemnly (and confidently) declared that his government did not deserve to survive the next election if 100,000 Irish were unemployed. When Fianna Fail called the election in May, unemployment stood at 126,000, or about 11 percent of the workforce—identical to the Thatcherized United Kingdom.

Fianna Fail's strategy in 1977 was to force-feed profits to private enterprise through tax cuts and subsidies with the expectation that the one-sided largesse would be reciprocated through job-creating investments. But Fianna Fail discovered that the gratitude of private enterprise does not constitute a policy, and dropped that strategy by 1979. More to the point, Fianna Fail had decided that it could not continue the massive borrowing that propelled the misadventure.

But when he succeeded Lynch as prime minister in December 1979, Charles Haughey no sooner uttered the mournful message of financial austerity to come to grips with inflation and the public debt than he reverted—under intense political pressure—to the original free-spending formula. The 1981 party manifesto defensively proclaimed that “without borrowing, an economy, at our stage of development, cannot be expanded.” The change of heart was prompted by a 37 percent rise in unemployment in the last year, a drop in farm incomes of 50 percent over two years, falling investment and the prospect of an imminent election. Given the logic of the exported foreign investment-fed development path undertaken by Irish governments for the last two decades, borrowing was the only way out politically for Fianna Fail.

Enticed by 15-year tax holidays (among many other incentives), foreign firms have

been providing the bulk of new jobs—and now control more than half the total manufacturing assets in the Irish Republic. Responding both to Common Market directives and to pressure from Irish business, the government instituted a tax reduction on all manufacturing firms from the nominal 45 percent to a more inspiring 10 percent. (More than half the profitable firms paid less than 10 percent anyway.) Accordingly, the tax burden on the average pay-as-you-earn worker mounted from 60 percent of total tax contribution to 90 percent over the last 10 years.

Up to half a million Irish workers marched in a single day in a series of demonstrations demanding tax reforms during 1978 and 1979. But those demonstrations targeted the largely exempt farmers just as agriculture went into a tailspin. No tax hikes there. As for the elite 10 percent who control three quarters of all wealth in “poor auld Ireland,” Fianna Fail abolished a paltry Wealth Tax introduced by the 1973-77 Fine Gael-Labour coalition. “This is still a growing country,” explained a minister for finance, “and we don’t want people scared away by the kind of wealth tax we had before.” So a-courting the lenders and, futilely, Margaret Thatcher did go Charles Haughey.

In the pre-election sweepstakes, Fianna Fail increased borrowing from the “unacceptable level” of 13 percent of GNP the previous year to 18 percent, doubled the funding of the industrial development programs, subsidized farm incomes with massive grants and reintroduced food subsidies for an urban working class whose wage levels were, until Greece's entry, the lowest in the European Economic Community. In what may be termed an honest diversion of the electorate from the major issues of 20 percent inflation and high unemployment, Haughey set out to forge a “special relationship” with Thatcher as a basis for working out a solution to the Northern Ireland nightmare. But nothing worked.

With 22 new seats contended in the expanded 166-seat parliament, Fianna Fail fell from 84 to 78 seats (13 sitting FF deputies were defeated) while Fine Gael took 65 seats, the faltering Labour Party 15 (losing three) and independents and fringe parties six. Two seats were won in the border counties by H-Block hunger strikers. In quest of an outright majority, Fianna Fail, lacking six seats, and Fitzgerald's coalition, lacking four, both wooed the six unincarcerated deputies until the Socialist Labour Party's Noel Browne, the Workers Party's Joe Sherlock, and independent socialist Jim Kemmy through their calculated abstentions boosted the coalition precariously into office. Only one independent endorsed Fianna Fail.

Fitzgerald's coalition, then, was not so much elected as Fianna Fail was voted out. A talented and humane politician, Garret Fitzgerald is arduously promoting the grudging transformation of tradition-

ally Tory Fine Gael into a social democratic party. Yet an irrepressible conservative colleague signaled to voters how incomplete that process still is when he exhorted the country to take “the rough stone path back to national solvency and self-respect.” The Labour Party, which suffered in the 1973-to-1977 coalition, is clearly caught in a bitter bind inasmuch as Fitzgerald will be forced to impose strict fiscal policies that can only further erode Labour's base.

Labour entered the election without a pre-election pact with Fine Gael—which hurt, since few voters wanted to buy “a pig in a poke.” While Fine Gael proposes to eliminate the budget deficit, impose “price norms” to control inflation, and deal out tax cuts and credits to stimulate the economy, Labour wants to establish a National Development Corporation to coordinate and expand job creation, tax equity and an economic plan. The independent socialists in the coalition are a wild card that may extract more concessions than Fine Gael intended for Labour policies. It remains to be seen whose pig will get poked.

Assuming the prime ministership, Fitzgerald declared that the Northern Irish hunger strike is his top priority. The coalition parties differ little from Fianna Fail in the essential aspects of Northern Ireland policy. Both favor a confederal solution with the United Kingdom until such time—if ever—that the Northern Irish majority peacefully accedes to a united Ireland.

Jack Kurt Jacobsen, who is writing a book on Irish politics, has taught political science at the University of Chicago.

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# THE Permanent



**"If you control housing, you control the migrants and the migrant economy," says a contractor for bigtime growers.**



## HE wandereth abroad for bread saying, where is it?

Job 15:23

The migrant farmwoman leaned against the doorway of her home, a two-year-old at her feet and a baby in her arms. Her eyes were out of a Dorothea Lange photograph, tired and unfocused.

"We're always fighting the rats in here," she said. "The rats get up on top of tables and they eat whatever's left. Sometimes they even crawl all over the beds and everything."

She paused.

"Don't think the rats are little rats like this." She held her hands six inches apart. "They're like cats."

Longer pause.

"It's very hard to find another place."

This farmworker lives in Pierson, Florida, the self-proclaimed "Ferncapitol of the World." She's a ferncutter and the wife of a ferncutter. Everyday that there is work and that she doesn't have to take care of her two children she goes with her husband out to the fields. Wearing a bracelet of rubber bands to her elbow, she hunches over the ferns all day, tying clumps of ferns together with the bands from her wrist. Everyday after work she returns to what she calls home.

But there's not much to come home to. Her front door is flanked by an empty pesticide drum and guarded by a dead snake. A Lay-Z-Boy forever reclining shares the living room with a stained cot propped into a seesaw position with a cinder block. The bedroom where the whole family sleeps is ruled by open suitcases. And the kitchen bristles with peeling paint and

coils of angry wires. The other rooms are unlivable.

But she is luckier than some. Behind her home is a trailer housing nine people, where you can see from one room to another through the holes next to the electrical outlet. And the toilet flushes excrement into a standing lake of raw sewage under the trailer.

On the other side of town lives Terry Taylor, owner of fern fields and owner of the house and trailer. He rents both the house and trailer out at \$35 a week plus utilities. Another trailer he rents at \$25 per week per family. Four families—including 14 adults—live in it. On the other side, is his house, painted white with a manicured lawn and carefully tended bushes.

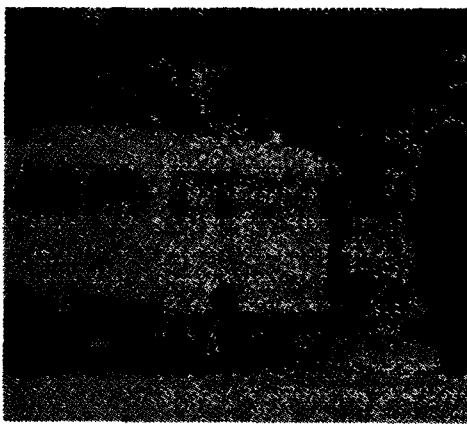
These ferncutter homes are typical of migrant and seasonal housing throughout the country. Farmworkers live in a series of camps, barracks, shanty towns and abandoned motels. They live in clusters off roads named Cockroach Bay and Moccasin Wallow and in towns named Prosperity and Pleasant Lane. They are hidden far beyond the "no trespassing" signs posted at the end of dusty roads. They have no addresses and get no mail. Their houses dot the landscape, but never the map.

There are, of course, some picture-perfect farmworker camps, some maintained with the help of Farmers Home Authority 1 percent loans, some either owned outright or rented by the individual growers or agribusiness cooperatives. But these model camps didn't get that way out of the goodness of the owners' hearts. In the words of a legal secretary working for Florida Rural Legal Services about such a model camp owned by Andrew Duda

and Sons, Inc., "They burned it to the ground it was so bad. Now they're all out picking in leisure suits after Jack Anderson wrote a series on them."

## TROUBLE and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him.

Job 15:24



Historically, farmworkers have been categorically excluded from protective legislation. Only farmworkers have no federal rights under the NLRA. Worker's compensation standards only provide coverage or partial coverage in 28 states and no coverage in the rest. Migrants are exempted from most of the provisions in the Fair Labor Standards Act. And it was only in 1978 that migrants became eligible for the same minimum hourly wage as the rest of the country—although according to Maria Mazzora, an industrial hygienist for the Workers' Institute for Safety and Health (WISH), "There are so many qualifiers that a migrant in Texas can get paid as low as \$1.65 an hour and still fulfill the legal qualifications."

Migrants are also exempted from certain child labor laws—a child as young as 11 can legally work in the fields. Migrants often get short shrift on Social Security and food stamps,

because of inaccurate wage statements submitted by unscrupulous growers and crewleaders.

The laws that do protect farmworkers are rarely adequately enforced, and many of them only apply to citizens. Several laws are regularly threatened with evisceration—notably two of the most important to the farmworkers' welfare, the Farm Labor Contractor Registration Act (FLCRA), and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

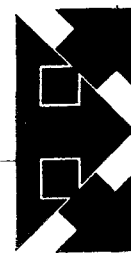
Agribusiness lobbyists are pushing to amend FLCRA. FLCRA became law in 1964 and in 1974 was substantially strengthened by amendment. Since 1974, however, under pressure from agribusiness, Congress has exempted various interests from the act. And last year Senator Boren (D-Ok.) sponsored a comprehensive amendment to FLCRA in the form of a non-germaine rider to the Child Nutrition Amendments of 1980. Supported by a strong coalition, the amendment passed the Senate, but met with fatal opposition in the House.

The amendment has surfaced again this term in the Senate, and a hearing is scheduled for sometime in July. The hearing is to take place before Senator Quayle's (R-Ind) sub-committee.

Garry Bryant, a staff attorney for the Migrant Legal Action Program, in Washington, D.C., believes the Boren amendment would "mega-gut" the legislation. Among other provisions, FLCRA requires contractors to inform workers about wages and working conditions in writing and in a language in which the workers are fluent. Contractors are also required to register with DOL, keep payroll records and provide accurate wage statements to the workers. The Boren amendment, if passed, would exempt from these provisions any contractor who is a full or part-time employee of a grower, and any migrant who work at agricultural entities other than a ranch or farm (such as a packing house or cannery).



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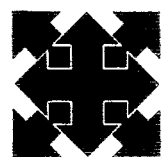
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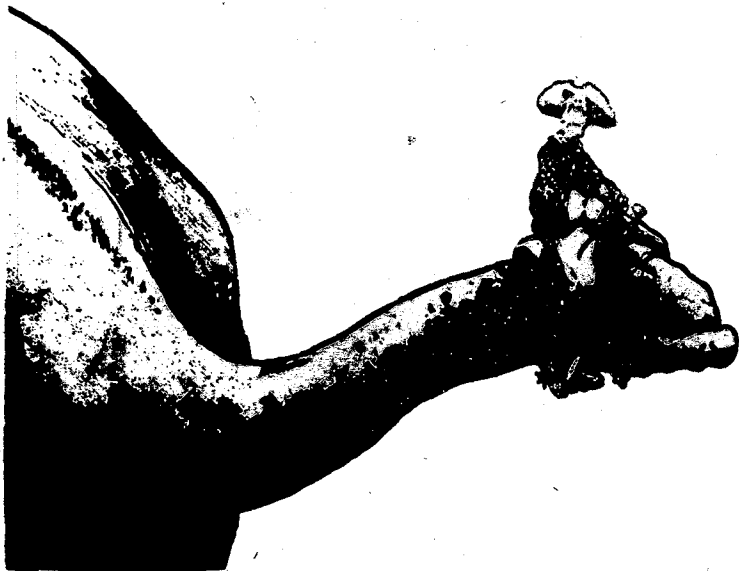
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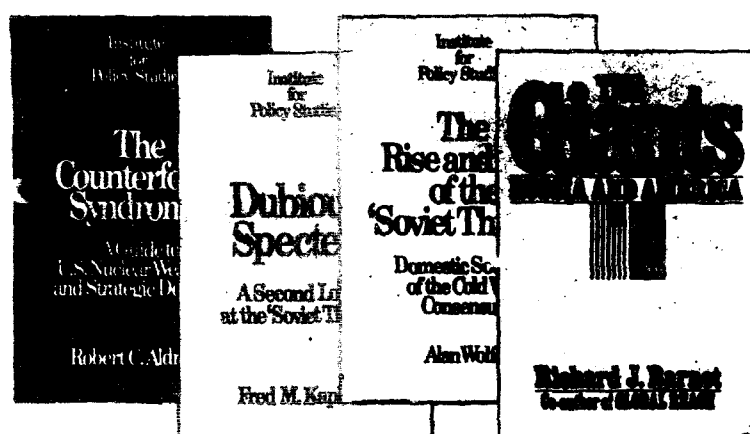
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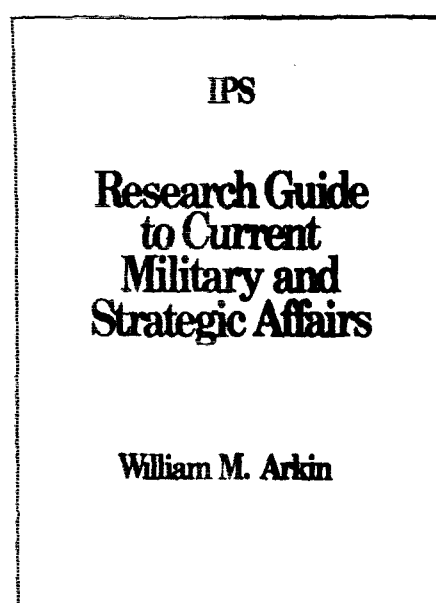
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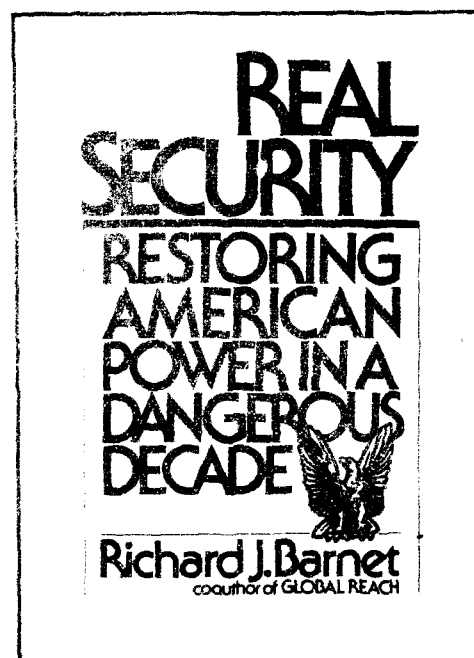
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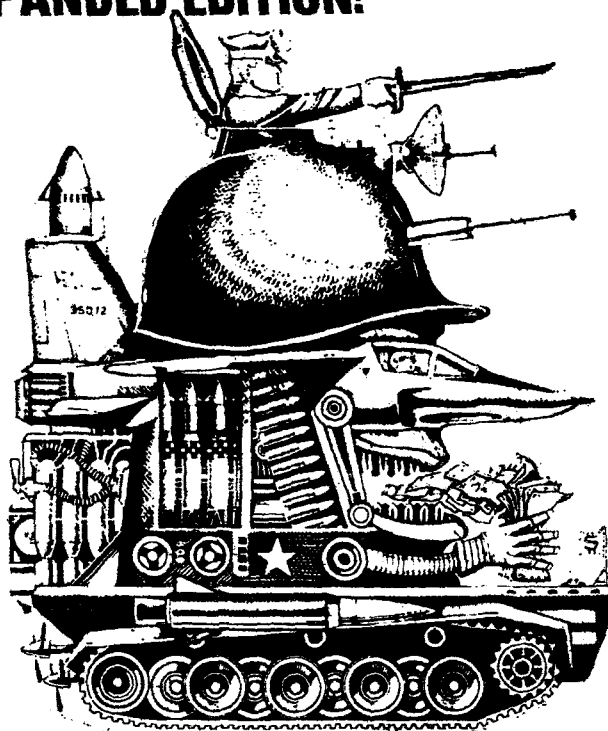
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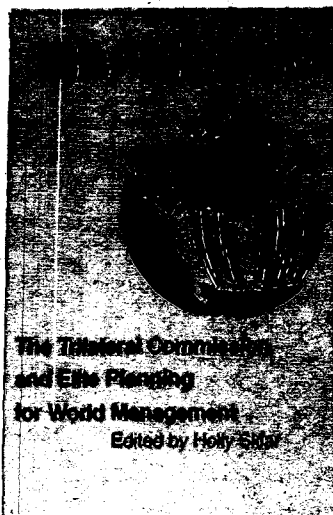
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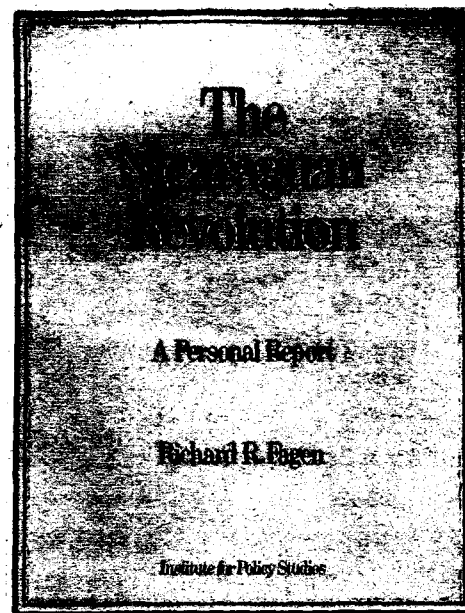
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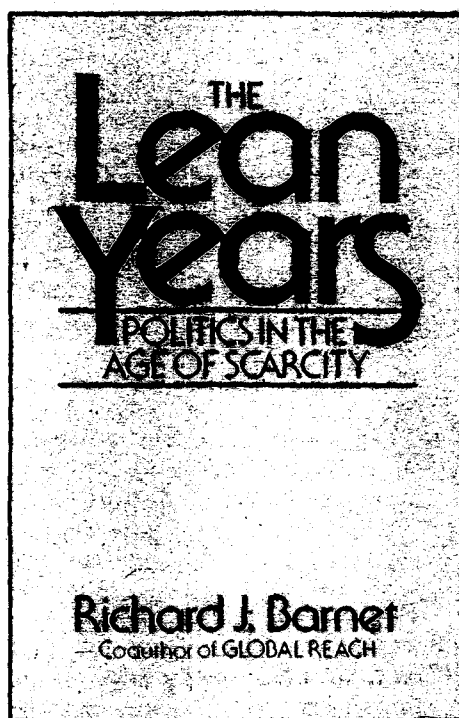
Malnutrition and starvation, drastic loss of soil fertility, depletion of fossil fuel reserves, pollution, declining food quality, urban sprawl and unemployment, the disappearance of family-held farms, and the mass dislocation of rural populations—these are the costs of modern U.S. agricultural methods, both in industrialized countries and in the Third World.

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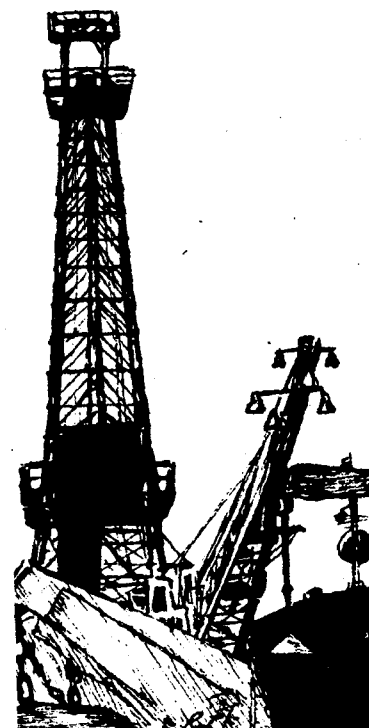
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aphs by Susan Moeller

# Migration



Travis McPherson, a Hereford Texas sheriff, bluntly stated the agribusiness position during a High Plains Vegetable Growers Association panel discussion on February 17, 1981. "I think that Texas Rural Legal Aid is the problem," he said, "because they're supplying these people with information and they're telling them all about the federal laws and everything."

Although the large corporate brokers argue that it is the crewleaders or "body brokers" who are the real culprits in migrant abuse, the sheer power of the growers is alone a reason for regulating them. According to the recent USDA statistics, 6.6 percent of all farms encompass 54 percent of all the farmland in the U.S. with the concentration especially strong in the fruit and vegetable industry. Two percent of all farmers use one-third of all farm wage labor.

Typical of the abuses of this power, is a case filed this year against a vegetable grower in Colorado—Flores, et. al. v. Venegas.

According to the complaint filed in this case, the grower recruited and hired migrants during the summers of 1979 and 1980. He told the workers that they would work on his farm for two or three days to insure that they were good workers and then he would refer them to other growers in the area. He also promised free housing.

The grower provided rat-infested housing with no running water. Up to six workers were crammed into one and two room shacks. The workers had no choice but to bathe and wash clothes and dishes in the nearby irrigation ditches laced with pesticides. They also worked with no wages for 10 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week for periods ranging from one week to two months before the grower was "adequately convinced" their work was good enough for him to refer them

to other employers. Even after they were hired elsewhere, they continued to live in his housing because of the lack of housing in the area. For rent, the grower then required the migrants to work on his farm on Saturdays and Sundays, 12 hours a day and occasionally on weekdays after they returned from their other jobs.

This vegetable grower would be included in current FLCRA legislation once he began referring the workers out to other agricultural employers. The Boren amendment would re-define the law to the extent that this grower would be placed beyond the jurisdiction of FLCRA.

S.T. Rendon, a housing contractor out of Levelland, Texas, agrees that the housing of migrants is a critical issue for the growers. "In the Southern Plains and into the Panhandle in Texas, if you control the housing you control the flow of migrants and the whole economy."

**AND he dwelleth in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps. Job 15:28**



Last summer, crewleader Waldo Galan recruited Texas migrants to come to South Carolina to pick cucumbers. Galan promised the workers "plenty of work," high earnings at 45 cents per bucket of cucumbers and good furnished housing in a camp provided by the grower W.H. McLeod and Sons. To cinch the deal, Galan passed out to prospective workers postcards of the labor camp—it was a color photograph of the Combahee Motel complete with swaying palm trees and a swimming pool.

When the crew arrived in South Carolina to start the picking they discovered that the motel was filthy. Families of 10 and 12 people were cramped into one room. The rooms were unfurnished so that many families slept on the floor for several days. The indoor toilets didn't work and only dirty portable outdoor toilets were available. The water was foul-tasting and there were no stoves until the McLeods bought two hot plates. The last straw was that the swimming pool had been filled in.

Farmworker housing is scarce. FHA in December 1980 estimated that 1.2 million units of housing were needed by farmworkers and only 425,000 were actually provided.

According to Farmers' Home Authority in December 1980, 95 percent of farm labor housing is privately owned. The housing units owned or rented by growers are typically tin saunas and ramshackle fire traps. In Hereford, Texas, migrants are housed in old concentration camp buildings originally provided for Italian prisoners of war in WWII.

Migrants are also bussed out to live in "company towns"—towns completely owned and dominated by one grower or co-op or cotton gin.

Dell City in West Texas is such a place. Within sight of El Capitan, the town is 28 square miles of green surrounded by coyotes and dust and mesquite. The story goes that while looking for oil wells out in the Texas desert, the company struck pay dirt. Not oil, but four sweet-as-mother's-milk water wells and one of natural gas. Using the water to irrigate the land and the gas to fuel the houses an All-American success story was founded.

All-American except that as far north as Lubbock and as far west as El Paso stories circulate about the "1984" quality of Dell City. It is said that within a few minutes of entering the town, not only will everyone know you are there, but they will know who you are. Outsiders caution others not to stay long after dark and to always remember where the two roads out of town are.

Sometimes farmworkers arrive at a job to find that no housing exists. Workers are then forced to live in their cars or to sleep in the fields, so close to the rows that they could, if they wanted, reach up even as they sleep and pick the crops they wait on all day.

With poor or no sanitation facilities, with rats, insect-infested mattresses, broken windows and doors, uncovered garbage piles, unsafe electrical connections, and over-crowding, migrants are prone to diseases other segments of America though existed only in third world countries. Migrants live on the average 20 years less than the average American—to age 49. The infant mortality rate is 125 percent that of the rest of the U.S. Forty-four and one-half percent of the farmworker households have one or more disabled members. In the words of a crewleader interviewed by Robert Coles in *Migrants Sharecroppers Mountaineers: Volume II of Children of Crisis*, "Everyone gets a disease and dies, but migrant people, they get diseases 25 years before other people do."

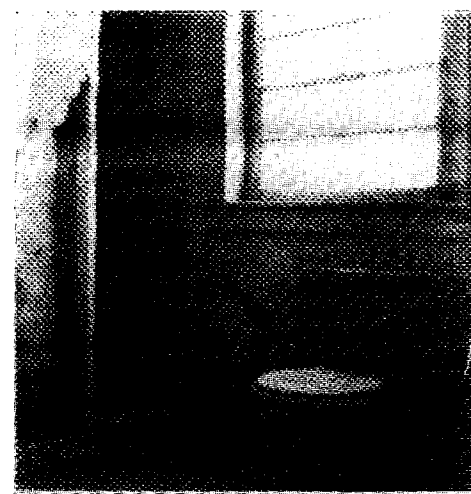
Pesticide poisoning also kills hundreds annually. Because of the lack of sanitary facilities, farmworkers are frequently forced to evacuate in the fields. By wiping themselves with crop foliage, the farmworkers unwittingly expose themselves to extreme pesticide poisoning, because the genital area absorbs 100 percent of pesticides through dermal contact. Therefore, any pesticide residue on the crop foliage will be passed into the farmworker's system.

Farmworkers are also exposed to pesticides in the camps. Often empty or partially empty drums are left around. Despite the bold warnings on the side labels, "Danger, destroy after use. Keep out of reach of children," migrant children can be seen occasionally playing on or near them.

The Food and Drug Administration estimates that 800-1,000 farmworkers are killed annually by pesticide poisoning and that another 80-90,000 are injured per year. These figures place agribusiness third in occupational death and serious injury rates. (Mining and construction are one and two).

Injury for migrant workers leads to insult. In Fabens, Texas, for example, a farm worker, working for grower Gail Surratt of the El Paso Valley Cotton Association, slipped a disc and fell out of a tractor while on the job. Because he could no longer work, he was given three days to move his family out of the grower's housing. The family was pushed out on the road with no idea of where to go.

**HE shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue. Job 15:29**



In the year 1978-79, in 10 major agricultural states, the average farmworker family of 4.94 persons earned \$3,025. Many farmworkers are always in debt to their crewleader, some kept in literal peonage. As Johnny Goodnight, President of the South West Florida Winter Vegetable Growers Association, told NBC News, "Anytime you add a cost to my farm, it's got to come out of somebody's pocket...Every regulation that is added on to me most likely will be cut out of the workers' pay."

Many migrants go through life never having seen a dentist or even a doctor. They lack the money to clothe themselves adequately, to have proper nutrition, to own a home or rent a decent one.

They have little choice but to remain on the go, always after the crops, base state to stream state, North in the summer and South in the winter. But however far they travel the scene stays the same. The same crewleaders, same crops, same housing.

Even a novice can pick out the migrant housing anywhere in the country. Cinderblock barracks, corrugated huts and adobe boxes are found at the end of every pitted and gutted dirt road. And if there is doubt whether a dog-eared gray building is a chicken coop or a migrant camp, just look for the big house. If the building is close to the house, it's a chicken coop.

Susan Moeller, a photojournalist in Washington, D.C., recently completed a four-state survey of FLCRA violations for Migrant Legal Action Program.



## EDITORIAL

*Court pick is the best we can hope for under Reagan*

If Jimmy Carter had nominated Sandra D. O'Connor for the Supreme Court there would have been good reason to oppose her nomination. As a member of the Arizona State Legislature from 1969 to 1974, she actively supported measures to hamstring labor unions. In 1972, she backed a farm labor law that outlawed secondary boycotts and provided for a 10-day injunction in the case of strikes occurring at harvest time. The law destroyed the United Farm Workers organizing campaign in Arizona. O'Connor also supported a bill that would have prevented unions from contributing to political campaigns.

As an Arizona Appeals Court judge, her record is at best inconclusive. Her deference to legislative and lower-court decisions suggests that she will follow the current conservative Supreme Court majority's practice in cases involving school desegregation and state limitations on abortion, which has been to defer to the wisdom or intentions of the legislative branch. She also upheld the imposition of the death penalty.

But a Democrat is no longer in the White House, and Strom Thurmond, not Edward Kennedy, chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee that will hold hearings on O'Connor's confirmation. Given Ronald Reagan's and the Republican Senate's political predilections, the nation could not have done better than Sandra D. O'Connor. While an opponent of labor, O'Connor has supported the Equal Rights Amendment and opposed a constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion. On judicial grounds, she appears to be fully qualified. And she is the first woman ever to be appointed to the Supreme Court.

O'Connor's nomination removes an important barrier to the recognition that men and women are fully equal. In 1869 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the state of Illinois' refusal to grant a woman the license to practice law on the grounds that law was not a proper vocation for a woman. Only 50 women have ever been appointed to any branch of the federal judiciary. As late as 1960, only 3 percent of law school students were women, and graduates like O'Connor faced severe discrimination. When O'Connor graduated from Stanford Law School in 1952, the only position initially offered her was one of legal secretary.

In 1981 discrimination still pervades the legal profession, albeit in more subtle ways. Women hired into law offices are often chosen on the basis of their looks; they are treated as "girls" rather than as fully functioning lawyers; they tend to get the less significant cases and therefore have difficulty gaining partnerships. "It's a very tough road," De Paul University Law School professor Deborah Evenson commented.

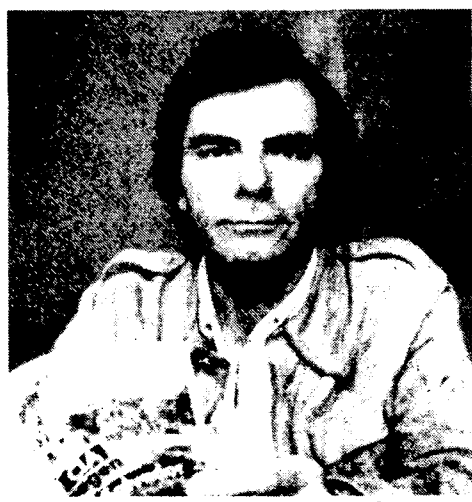
O'Connor's nomination also demonstrates Reagan's political perspicacity. In the 1980 campaign, Reagan did worst among women. In one election survey he defeated Jimmy Carter among men by 54 to 37 percent and among women by only 46 to 45 percent. Among women who supported the ERA, Reagan lost by 65 to 32 percent. As the April 1981 *New York Times*/CBS poll shows, wide majorities of the population support both the ERA and women's right to an abortion 57 to

33 percent and 63 to 25 percent respectively. If Reagan and the Republicans were to become closely identified with the New Right's positions on those two issues they would be courting defeat in 1982 and 1984.

Reagan understood this when he chose George Bush to be his vice-president. And by appointing O'Connor, he shows that he still understands it. But just as Bush's nomination was followed eventually by the appointment of Robert Billings, the Moral Majority's legislative director, to a high Education Department post, O'Connor's appointment will be followed by a grand gesture to Jerry Falwell and Richard Viguerie. While applauding O'Connor's nomination as the best possible in the current circumstances, supporters of women's rights should not therefore assume that Reagan has set sail in a new direction. He has only shown that he can sail the boat with both hands. ■



Sandra D. O'Connor's appointment to the Supreme Court is an attempt to mask Reagan's unpopular positions on women's issues.

*But the Agee verdict is an ominous ruling, confirming our worst fears*

Philip Agee may not be the only one to lose the freedom to travel.

The right to international travel is one of the freedoms that distinguishes liberal democracies such as our own from the so-called authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. Americans have always cherished this freedom and felt great compassion for those deprived of it—whether they be Germans caught behind the Berlin Wall or Soviet Jews unable to travel to Israel. Yet on June 30, the Supreme Court issued a ruling that will curb Americans' freedom of international travel by sanctioning a 1966 State Department directive authorizing the Secretary of State to revoke the passports of any American he decides is "causing or likely to cause serious damage to the national security or foreign policy of the United States."

The Supreme Court's seven-to-two ruling concerned the case of *Agee vs. Haig*. The controversy began in December 1979 when then-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance revoked Philip Agee's passport after the former CIA operative suggested that the U.S. offer its CIA files on Iran since 1950 in exchange for the safe return of the hostages held in Tehran.

Agee, who since 1974 has dedicated

himself to exposing CIA undercover agents, has long been reviled in Washington diplomatic and intelligence circles. Though he has recently written that his activity "derives from an alternative definition of national security"—one that does not identify the security of Americans with the profits of ITT and Chase Manhattan—his lawyers chose not to argue on these grounds. Instead, they argued that Congress had not authorized the Secretary of State to revoke passports and that the revocation of Agee's passport deprived him of his rights of travel, free speech and due process.

The Supreme Court decided against Agee on all counts. Chief Justice Burger's majority opinion stated that Congress had implicitly approved of the Secretary of State's right to withhold passports even though this power has been rarely used. In fact, it has been used only once since the 1966 directive was issued. By ruling that congressional silence about the directive implies congressional approval, the chief justice circumvented the previous court standard that congressional approval of a State Department policy can be demonstrated only if Congress has acquiesced to a "substantial and consistent practice."

Now all the executive branch need do is issue a directive and hope that Congress will be too preoccupied with other matters to notice. As Mark Lynch, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union, told *In These Times*, "This amounts to a new theory of congressional acquiescence that will greatly enhance the powers of the State Department because Congress is too overloaded to scrutinize the many regulations issued by the State Department."

The decision's implications extend well beyond those who share Agee's views or condone his practices. Its scope extends not just to national security, but as stated in the 1966 directive, to foreign policy as well, empowering the Secretary

of State to withhold the passport of any American citizen who might be considered an actual or potential threat to an administration's foreign policy.

But is it wise to entrust Americans' freedom to travel to an administration that sees the supporters of every national liberation movement as agents of Soviet terrorism and everyone to the left of Henry Kissinger as a subversive?

The ruling also has grave implications for First Amendment freedoms. Though the majority opinion contended that revocation of Agee's passport "is an inhibition of action rather than speech," dissenting Justice William Brennan pointed out that "under the court's rationale, I would suppose that a 40-year prison sentence imposed upon a person who criticized the government's food stamp policy would only represent an 'inhibition of action.' After all the individual would remain free to criticize the United States government albeit from a jail cell."

Anyone critical of American foreign policy may now be threatened by the fear that their criticism might jeopardize their freedom to travel abroad. Reporters may be prevented from going to places like Vietnam or El Salvador because their activity might damage American foreign policy. The press' access to facts that might expose State Department misinformation and policy gaffes may be seriously hindered.

The most distressing aspect of the Supreme Court's ruling is that it comes at a time when congressional conservatives and the Reagan administration are promoting a number of measures that threaten the freedom of Americans—relaxation of restrictions on domestic intelligence and abolition of the Freedom of Information Act, to name just a few.

With the Agee decision, the Supreme Court has joined the Reagan administration's march to trample many of the United States' most cherished freedoms. ■



# LETTERS

**IN THESE TIMES** is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions express in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## MORTGAGES

I AM THE MANAGER OF A SMALL SAVINGS association's mortgage department. Our association was founded in 1867 to finance home mortgages. I have worked for this association four years.

The article about adjustable mortgage loans is incredibly biased against financial institutions (*ITT*, June 3). It is loaded with words geared to frighten consumers: "financial coup," "reindustrialization scheme," "shift housing (private) equity from homeowners to industry." The author ignores the historical importance of savings and loan associations, the critical problems facing us today, and the fact that these problems existed long before Reagan and his "supply siders" came into power.

Savings associations are the nation's largest suppliers of mortgage money for residential dwellings. We pay interest to savers and mortgage customers pay interest to us. It is necessary at least to break even on the deal. Most of the money we draw in today is invested in short term, variable rate certificates (on which we pay high interest rates and which provide a very volatile and unstable base for lending). The bulk of our mortgage investment is in long term, fixed rate mortgage loans. Our mortgage portfolio is weighed down by loans with fixed rate interest of less than 9 percent.

The point is that if savers want variable rate savings instruments, homebuyers will have to accept variable rate mortgages. It has nothing to do with ideological stances or a vast conspiracy to rip off consumers. It is simply business and survival.

The choice is obvious. Either people who want to buy their own homes educate themselves about adjustable rate mortgage instruments and invest carefully; or people who want to buy homes won't be able to. As the *New York Times* put it, "The only practical alternative to variable rate mortgages is no home mortgages at all."

Our orientation and our desire is to see capital invested in the local real estate market. However, because of the high cost of money, we are not even on the mortgage market. We are not alone.

The new regulations allow savings associations to develop a broad array of mortgage plans that reflect market conditions in a market where totally unregulated mortgages are impossible. I'd much rather offer an adjustable mortgage program to a young couple who want to buy their first house than to tell them that I'm sorry, we just can't help them.

The days of the savers who kept thousands of dollars in passbook accounts at low interest rates are over and will never be seen again. The days to come will require homebuyers to become investors, aware of the market and its changes, and willing to renegotiate their mortgages to get the best deal.

—Katherine Sheriff  
Carlisle, Pa.

## CARPENTERS

I AM GOING TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION of the Carpenters Union in Chicago the first week of September. I am interested in using this convention to build a nationwide opposition to the present policies of our union, and would like to make contact with other delegates concerned about the direction our

union is (and has been) heading in.

Of course, I am also interested in contacting other active union members, whether they are delegates or not, particularly in the Chicago area, where we might be able to meet.

As an active member (and presently Recording Secretary) of Carpenters Local 36, I have worked for active participation of the membership in all aspects of our union's life...from the need for stronger contracts and contract enforcement to the need for a real political struggle and an independent labor party.

I would be interested in hearing from other carpenters and building trades workers with similar concerns. I can be contacted at 914 E. 22 St., Oakland, Calif. 94606.

—John Reimann  
Oakland, Calif.

## PUBLIC HOSPITALS

I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST ELLEN Cantarow's article on public hospitals. As a pediatrician working in the public sector I can really understand the frustrations voiced by many of the other public health workers in the article.

Although the article was excellent, it failed to cover the major public health struggles going on here on the West coast. Both in San Francisco and Los Angeles fights have taken place around the future of the public hospitals and clinics. The impact of Proposition 13 and now the Reagan budget cuts further deepens a crisis that has been brewing for years. In the last decade more than 20 California counties have closed their public hospitals. Here in L.A. we face the imminent dismantling of the large and effective system of public ambulatory health centers.

However, over the past five years socialist health activists and others have built a powerful coalition of labor and community forces that has recently won a temporary restraining order prohibiting the County of Los Angeles from denying nonemergency health services to undocumented workers and their dependents. It took public rallies, speaking at hearings, media presence and legal action to block this latest attempt at cutting services.

One last point, there is more at stake in the issue of public hospitals and clinics than services for the poor. If we are ever going to have a national health system in this country, it will be built on the already existing system of public health services. Thus, it is extremely important that these services be defended and made efficient and modern. The system of public health facilities remains a threat to the private sector, especially if that system can do a good job.

—Steve Tarzynski, M.D.  
Health Commission, New American Movement (NAM), Los Angeles

## DOUBLE OOPS

PAT AUFDERHEIDE'S REVIEW OF RICHARD Pryor's *Bustin' Loose* (*ITT*, June 3) is an example of the style of work among social democrats that alienates them from poor and working class Afro-Americans. Aufderheide wrote, "Pryor is the one who made *Blazing Saddles* so funny." Oops! No, that was another "one"; Pryor did not appear in *Blazing Saddles*. The "one" in *Blazing Saddles* was Cleavon Little.

They don't even look alike...to blacks, anyway.

Furthermore, Aufderheide laments Pryor's not getting "a film vehicle that uses his excoriating talent." This comment ignores Pryor's most powerful and politically provocative role, to date, in the lead of *Blue Collar*, the best film treatment of race and class conflict among production workers in the auto industry since the documentary *Finally Got News* (produced by the League of Black Revolutionary Workers and the Black Economic Development Conference in the early '70s). Moreover, Aufderheide ignores the political significance of other Pryor films, e.g., *Which Way Is Up*, a feature-length comedy-with-a-purpose which focuses on farmworkers' organizing efforts and on co-optation of insurgent factory worker leadership.

Pryor is not simply a comedian; but is also (true to Pryor's own past as a volunteer with the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee—SNCC) a leading critic whose concerns reflect those of the black masses, of sexually oppressed groups, and of working class Americans in general.

So it was that Pryor's recent skirmish with death excited the sympathy of millions of Afro-Americans at the same time that the black grassroots was notably "ho-hum" about the shooting of Vernon Jordan. The sentimentalism of Pryor's *Bustin' Loose* is an unabashed defense of the black community, especially the black family, which has been just as unabashedly sentimental in defense of Pryor. If this kind of reciprocal affirmation seems mawkish to Aufderheide, it may be because she is ignorant of Pryor's political and cultural context.

—Muhammad Isaiyah Kenyatta  
Williamstown, Mass.

Pat Aufderheide replies: I also have the highest respect for Pryor's critical perspective on this society. My regard for his acting talents in his latest comedy is not intended to slight his talent as a writer, as demonstrated in his contribution to *Blazing Saddles*. Yes, Cleavon Little was the actor, and I'm sorry my reference to Pryor's writing of part of the script of that film left that point ambiguous. It's disheartening that the studio push to crossover films has left black families with so little follow-through after films like *Five on the Black Hand Side*, *Claudine*, *Leadbelly* and others from the early '70s that even the banality of *Bustin' Loose*'s sentiment is welcome relief. (The film reputedly did \$12 million of business in its first 10 days out with scant publicity, because of black audiences.) As for the other films, I thought *Which Way Is Up*

was a mess, and I agree with Kenyatta that Pryor's role in *Blue Collar* was excellent—much better, in my opinion, than the film as a whole.

## TRAPPED

ROBERT ST.-CYR'S ATTACK ON IRISH nationalism and defense of what he calls internationalism (*ITT*, May 20) demands a response. Irish nationalism occurs in the context of a struggle against an imperial power, as does Salvadoran nationalism, Namibian nationalism, and the nationalism of any colony struggling to throw off the imperial yoke.

That one faction of the working class supports the empire does not mean the empire is in the right. It is unfortunate that a religious issue has been used to gain the allegiance of Northern Irish Protestants to the empire, but that is exactly what has happened. The religious issue is secondary; it was created by imperialists to divide the Irish working class. Mr. St.-Cyr, for all his professions of enlightened, "internationalist" socialism, has fallen into the trap set by his overlords.

Internationalism is a very high sounding word, but there is a tremendous difference between proletarian internationalism and imperial or capitalist internationalism. Mr. St.-Cyr is defending the latter. This is clear enough if you consider that the subject of his defense is the British Empire, not the British working class.

One of those who speaks for the British working class, Tony Benn, has had the courage to speak out in support of Irish civil rights, in spite of being hooted down by his colleagues in Parliament. Benn's is the true socialist internationalism. He should be commended and supported.

—Ann Tattersall  
Eugene, Ore.


## HANGING ON

I DEPEND ON *ITT* TO SUPPLY ME WITH A noncorporate view of the news every week. It will be difficult for me getting only a bi-weekly dose this summer, but I will make it.

I am sending a check to help you make it. I appreciate your blend of local, national, and international coverage. You include just enough humor to make it fun. Sylvia is a welcome addition.

Thank you and hang in there!

—Steve McLuckie  
Independence, Mo.



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# PERSPECTIVES

## Socialism: a moral and practical alternative

Tony Benn is the leader of the resurgent left wing of the British Labour Party. The former Minister of Industry was the architect behind the leftwingers' recent victory in their fight for popular participation in the selection of Labour MPs and the Labour Party leader. Following is an excerpt of his speech last December at the Institute for Democratic Socialism's conference on Eurosocialism in Washington, D.C.

**S**Ocialism is bred out of experience and not out of theory. Many people have written books about socialism but what makes socialism is the experience of life, the struggle that it brings and the opportunity to study that struggle at leisure.

Last November I was in Liverpool, where unemployment in the urban areas is at 60 percent. We had 15,000 people on the streets from all over the United Kingdom to lead a campaign against it. In other areas it is 50 percent. The threat that unemployment brings to the lives of working people and indeed to the whole community is so direct that it must be perceived as our major problem—not only the direct effect of unemployment, but also the indirect effects—like the fact that money that should be going to health and welfare is now diverted into the unemployment dole.

The social effect of unemployment is striking especially in the black community. It strikes at women who have been forced out of work back into the home. When people face mass unemployment they are frightened and they swing to the right as has happened historically—It certainly happened in Germany in the '30s—and then out of that situation comes the justification for a law and order society in which suppression is the answer to problems that should be solved by creating jobs.

The inherent contradiction of capitalism of unemployed people and unmet needs coexisting side by side, while resources that are available to bring people back into work to meet human needs are being wasted in speculation and indeed in the use or the development of things that are not in the common interest, has led many people in the British Labor movement, after 30 years, to look back at the fundamentals.

### Employment by rearmament.

When this problem last occurred in the '30s, the western world was brought back to full employment by rearmament and war. It was public expenditure, that went into rearmament, that brought life back to those areas in Britain where there was mass unemployment in steel and engineering and shipbuilding and then it ended in the tragic Second World War.

This is relevant for a second reason, that there is at the moment a deep insecurity among the superpowers about their external security. There is a serious danger that the military establishments in both East and West will feed upon each other and persuade both societies to divert resources from meeting human needs—which might give us a world of greater justice—into a new twist to the arms race.

The challenge to this generation is how to restore full employment without rearmament and war. There is quite a lot of experience now available to us. The old welfare capitalism, which was developed out of the American New Deal under Roosevelt and out of the post-war Labour government, has now really lost its popular constituency. But there are

certain principles that I believe may be helpful as we face the immediate challenge of these times.

### Basing politics on morality.

One is we must refound politics on some concept of morality. It is simply not possible to ask the people of the Western world to adopt the principal of profit and loss as the guiding principal upon which our society should live today. We have become so familiar with the jargon of economics, and indeed the jargon associated with so many other of the complex issues with which we deal, that we have forgotten that at the root of most major decisions lie questions of right and wrong.

The word socialism is usually spat out in the western world as if it were some

and it must be the source of your strength in the United States. It is what is needed in the third world more than anything else, which is why in South Africa and many other countries it is the suppression of trade unionism that is the source of strength of the establishment. And it is greatly significant in my judgment that it should be trade unionism in Poland that may liberalize state communism.

Much is said about economic democracy. I'll come to it in a minute, but don't think we have not now got to re-fight the battle for political democracy, which we thought we had won when every man and woman got the vote. In my opinion, we are now seeing a submerging of those democratic gains we thought were secure. If I take Britain as an example, a country that prides itself on having been the mother of parliament; our laws and taxes are made by a commission in Brussels; our industrial policy is made by the multi-nationals; we are an off-shore air base for American F-111 fighters and cruise missiles; and the International Monetary Fund dictates our economic policy. I believe the time has come when, without any xenophobia or nationalism, we must demand the control of our own destiny, at least to the extent that we can respond to an international world that no one country, not even America, can control.

The next principal is that we must have direct representation of labor. It is no

principles? In every country you will find a different answer. But as we see it, there must be massive public investment in industry in order to permit it not only to return to full employment but to provide an initiative from labor. I'm speaking now of labor in its political context to allow us to develop the new technologies to the full in a way in which capitalism seems incapable of doing. If money goes into a public account, there must be public accountability and public ownership.

Second, put money into and recognize the role of the public services. One thing that is clear. If you don't modernize your industry there may be mass unemployment through lack of competitiveness. If you do modernize your industries there may be massive lay-offs because of the new technology employing fewer people. It is to the public services—to the development of health, education and housing and the care of the old and the sick and the young—it is in that area that the greatest element of growth will come, because the public services are the engine of development in a highly technological society.

Socialists believe it is our task to convert the privileges of the few to the rights of the many. If you want to know what the rich do with money, first of all they buy a better house, secondly they give their children a better education, and thirdly they look after their old people, maybe with round-the-clock nursing. These tasks, applied to a community as a whole, are labor intensive and would meet the needs that cannot be met if you operate solely within the framework of private ownership.

The next task is the democratic control of technology and power itself because technology is entirely neutral. The question is for whose benefit is it to be used? Who is to gain and who is to lose? For what purposes is it put? Many argue that technology is itself non-political; that technology allows you to escape from the democratic choice. But that is not really the case.

One other area is of fundamental importance and I don't know how to describe it other than in this phrase: We want the public ownership of knowledge. We do not want knowledge to be the monopoly of those who control the media, those who control education, those who keep company secrets so the people at work are denied access to the common storehouse of knowledge without which they cannot exercise power.

Now, my friends, these are programs that come out of our own experience in Britain, but such ideas must be translated into the language of your own history, culture and traditions.

This I would say by way of conclusion: However you look at labor, by which I mean the labor movement, and the socialist analysis that it has given birth to—labor must deliberately go beyond the point where it seeks to administer a system that is fundamentally unjust in its own operation. For far too long our perspectives have been set too low. Labor now has the power to dislocate the system that is based on market forces. And for that reason the power of labor is now to be broken by the monetarists, if they can get away with it. But the dislocation of a market economy, or the administration by labor or by socialists of a market economy is not an adequate answer to the problems that face us.

I believe the '80s will be a decade of danger and a decade of opportunity. Essentially it is a battle for democracy; it is a battle for the control of our own destiny no less in the East than in the West, no less in the North than in the South. If we allow the present trend towards centralization and the concentration of power to go unchecked, then our future will be written for us by others who do not have our interests at heart. I most sincerely wish you success in the United States, not just because we want to see this cause prosper, but also because to the extent that you can make progress with American opinion in advancing these ideas we shall be able to make progress ourselves, and to the extent that you fail, to that extent we shall suffer too.



Tony Benn is the leader of the left wing of the British Labour Party.

## The challenge to this generation is to restore full employment without rearmament and war.

sort of virus. Socialism they say and the mothers put their children to bed and turn them away from the television set. But you know it should be pronounced quite differently. The first man ever to be described as a socialist was Robert Owen. Of course it is socialism. It is the idea that society can be constructed to meet human needs instead of either to worship the hierarchy of feudal societies or even more to bow down to Mammon instead of God. I really believe that the refounding of our politics on the belief of human dignity is absolutely essential if we are to command popular support. And I might add if you don't offer any moral basis for your politics, people go off into strange cults, some of them even religious cults, in order to find satisfaction denied them by the present concentration upon personalities in lieu of issues and profit and loss instead of right and wrong.

The second principal that we must recognize is that there is no socialism possible except of a purely academic kind if it is not directly rooted in organized labor. That is the source of our strength

good hoping that liberals and conservatives, by courting the labor unions, can actually represent the interests of labor. Now I know that in the United States you have a system that is not so founded and it may be that your own experience will make it hard for this to happen. But I remember when Julius Nyerere set up a one-party state in Tanzania and an American journalist criticized him for it: he replied, even in America they only have one party, but with typical American extravagance they have two of them.

Labor in the United States should be more directly represented. But here's the point: it must be a labor movement that sees its task politically as well as industrially and it must be a labor movement that is in direct coalition with the blacks and with women and with the peace movement and the ecological movement—because they all represent different aspects of the same struggle against the same power structure.

### A new program.

Now what program would one expect to emerge from an attempt to apply those



ROBERTA LYNCH

## The media distort the value of labor unions

By Roberta Lynch

**T**HE OCCASION OF THE national Convention of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in early June elicited a barrage of media attention on this giant of the American labor movement. The extent of the publicity was prompted by the ascent of Roy Williams to the union's presidency in the wake of the death of Frank Fitzsimmons. But the Teamsters are no strangers to front pages. In fact, the IBT's notoriety is such that for many people in this country the Teamsters Union is the labor movement. The current wave of press coverage is indicative of the dominant media attitudes. It spotlights the large salaries, the



surprising is that there are still local IBT staff, leaders and members in cities across the country who haven't succumbed to cynicism and who keep on with the day-to-day work of building strong and effective union organizations. And looked at in this light, what is even more surprising is that in other lo-

arenas in which ordinary people can come together to define their own concerns, to develop new skills and understanding, and to glimpse a sense of their own potential. They are not free from problems, strife or dishonesty, but they are also possessed of an openness and capacity for change. They have not been immune to racist practices, but they also represent an enormous force for racial equality and cooperation.

Why then has the American public come to perceive labor unions as greedy and corrupt—out only to fatten their leaders' salaries or dupe their members into paying higher dues? In one recent survey only 13 percent of the respondents ranked unions as the institution in which they had the greatest confidence. The churches, public schools, state government and the federal government all finished higher. (Thank God, big business was the one institution that did score lower.)

The answer, as I have been suggesting, may well lie in the way in which the media acts to shape popular perceptions. The approbrium heaped on the Teamsters is not due to their bureaucratic rigidity or their questionable business deals. These are, after all, the hallmark of American enterprise. Corporations in

backyards. And there is the deliberate concealment from workers of the knowledge that they have contracted deadly diseases on the job. Yet what corporation is as synonymous with corruption and callousness in the public eye as the Teamsters Union?

This is not to say that the media never covers corporate abuses or to join in the Teamsters' contention that there is a journalistic vendetta against their union. But it is to say that the news establishment is much quicker to point the finger in the case of a trade union than it is in the case of a corporate crime. That it is much keener to look at the single scandal than to examine a large pattern of misconduct. That it is woefully negligent in its reportage on the labor movement as a whole.

Those who own and control the media have much in common with those who control the rest of the corporate world. Much more than they have with even the highest paid union official in the country. Not by conscious design, but simply by ingrained bias, they have given us an incomplete and distorted view of American labor.

I do not want to see the Teamsters spared public scrutiny. But I want to see far greater scrutiny given to the far great-

### Rank-and-filers are portrayed as sheep while reformers are ignored.

corrupt practices, and the organized-crime connections of elements of the union's leadership. It bemoans the lack of internal democracy. And it puzzles over why the membership tolerates this state of affairs. Occasionally it notes the presence of opposition forces.

It is true that there is something particularly venal about corruption within a labor union—an institution that by its very nature is intended to further the best interests of its membership. But it is also true that there is something particularly disturbing about the way that the media has shaped public perceptions by what is said—and what goes unsaid—in print and on the airwaves.

First of all, there is the rather willful determination not to mention any of the various Teamster sins whenever Ronald Reagan or some other Republican has his picture taken with his arm around the shoulders of the Teamster president or goes begging after a Teamster endorsement in order to claim "labor" support.

Worse, there is the leaden silence about what such public hand-holding signifies about behind-the-scenes deal-making. For, in essence, support for Republican presidential victors has managed to buy the union's leadership a reprieve from the kind of judicial scrutiny that might have been able to expose—and even arrest—criminal activity where it does exist.

Media coverage also tends to distort the matter of internal democracy—portraying rank-and-file members as unthinking or uncaring—sheep. Although reports on the recent convention finally produced a few nods toward Teamster "dissidents," the press has generally avoided taking serious notice of groups like Teamsters for a Democratic Union or PROD that are seeking union reform.

Nor has it paid much attention to the obstacles that these reformers encounter. Violence—or the threat of violence—is not uncommon. Red-baiting and other forms of name-calling are routine. Most prevalent—and perhaps most discouraging—are the sources of bureaucratic roadblocks thrown up in the path of any individual who seeks to challenge the status quo.

Journalistic lamentations about rank-and-file indifference are blind to the potency of this combination of tactics. What is surprising, in fact, is not the "apathy" of the Teamster membership. What is



Nixon, in courting support from the Teamsters' Frank Fitzsimmons (above), went so far as to pardon Jimmy Hoffa.

cals—even some of the most calcified—there continue to be individuals who face up to the intimidation or the closed doors to work for greater accountability and responsiveness to membership concerns. Sometimes they are part of organized networks. Sometimes they are completely alone. Sometimes they act out of strongly-held political principles. Sometimes they act out of gut-level anger and frustration.

These stories are seldom shouted from the headlines of our daily newspapers or beamed into our living rooms on the six o'clock news.

And there is another story that goes unreported as well. It is the account of the scores of other unions in this country. Media coverage of trade union activities is restricted to superficial reports on major national strikes. Yet there is in unions of every variety a wealth of experiences worthy of wider public attention. Local union members who know more than epidemiologists about cancer patterns. Union stewards who blow the whistle on secret hazardous waste disposal. Women in chemical factories who know first-hand the potential for causing birth defects of many commonly used manufacturing substances. Unions that face unscrupulous and high-paid consulting firms brought in not to negotiate with them but to break them. Unions that have joined in alliances with environmentalists to help clean up the air and the water. The list could go on.

The fact is that labor unions are on the whole among the most democratic institutions in American life. The local union represents one of the very few

this country are so devoid of democracy that the word is rarely ever even invoked in their lexicon. And business ethics have little to do with either legality or morality—being shaped largely by what can be gotten away with. There is price-fixing and there is bribery. There is secret dumping of toxic wastes virtually in people's

er corporate crimes. And I want to see the still largely hidden dramas of the fortitude, conflicts and courage of our nation's working men and women become a part of the public record as well. ■

Robert Lynch is active in the New American Movement, a democratic socialist organization.

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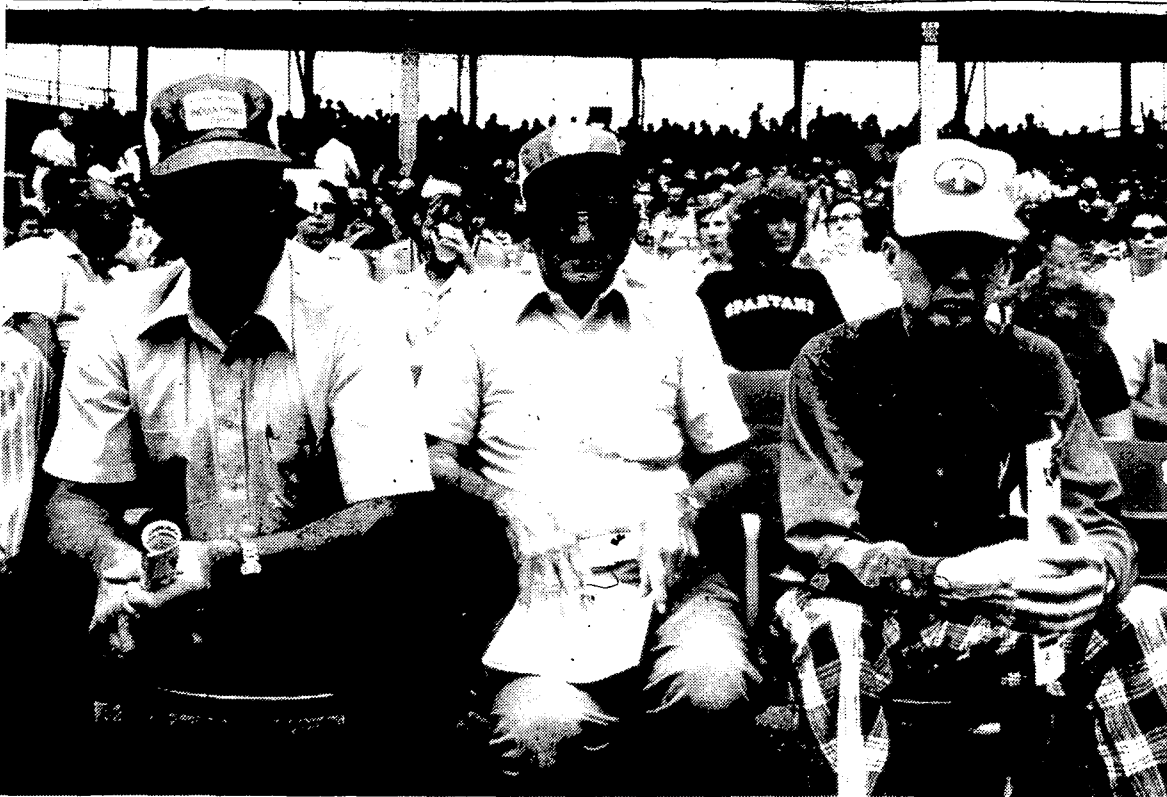
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## SPORTS BUSINESS



Even the exception that proved the rule, Wrigley Field, may change its character with new owners.

# The sports fan is on the endangered species list

## In Your Face! Sports for Love and Money

By Lee Ballinger  
Vanguard Books, P.O. Box 3566  
Chicago, IL 60654  
151 pp., \$2.95

Written in the language of the sports columnist, this book is remarkable because Ballinger examines the sports industry critically but clearly remains a fan. Ballinger, a Vietnam vet and Ohio steelworker, shows how professional sports are at times exploitative, racist, sexist and just plain ugly; he takes sports out of the ivory stadium that regular sports coverage usually leaves them in.

His primary assertion is simple—professional sports reflects the profit motive, inequalities and injustices present in everyday life. He does not tell us that sports are evil because they are somehow inextricably tied to capitalism or that they are good because they somehow oppose the present power structure. He just explodes the myth that professional sports has nothing to do with what goes on in the rest of the world. His topics include Olympics, minorities in sports, Muhammad Ali, an offbeat hall of fame, women athletes and recruitment practices. Following is an excerpt from his chapter on fans.

—Jim Steiker

By Lee Ballinger

"Congress bans all working people from NFL games!"

Science fiction? If you want to go to a Cowboy game at Texas Stadium, you first have to buy a season ticket for \$150. But to be allowed to buy a season ticket you have to purchase a stadium bond at a minimum cost of \$250.

Somehow you scrape together the money and buy that season ticket after four years on a waiting list. You drive to the stadium in eager anticipation of the first game. You settle into your seat, but it's a hot September day and

you're thirsty. You scan the stadium for a beer vendor but you don't see one anywhere. There's still 20 minutes until the kickoff so you truck on down to the concession stand. But they don't sell beer. A passing Exxon executive informs you that the only way to get a beer in Texas Stadium is to buy a membership at the Stadium Club. You decide you're not that thirsty.

The Broncos, the Redskins (who play in RFK Stadium, officially a national park built with our tax money), and the Giants sell only season tickets. But even if you can find a single game ticket, you still may not be able to afford it. The Red Sox raised their ticket prices in 1979 after they had made a \$3 million profit with the smallest park in baseball. The Atlanta Braves have eliminated all children's tickets. In the NBA almost all good seats are sold as season tickets. Unless you own a pair of binoculars, you'll be doing business with the scalpers. How do they get ahold of single-game season ticket seats, anyway?

## The price is wrong.

What drives ticket prices through the roof? It is not player salaries. Increases in wages don't cause price increases, as we all learned during the Nixon wage freeze. Any half-decent economist will tell you that when you print money that is not backed by gold, each dollar is worth less. This means it takes more dollars to buy a third base seat and that, ladies and gentlemen, is inflation.

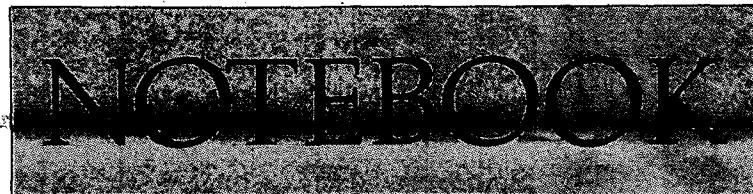
According to Bill Melchioni

of the New Jersey Nets' front office, ticket prices are tied to only two things: "how successful your team is and what the market is willing to pay." The Toronto Blue Jays are a perennial last-place team but they have the eighth-highest ticket prices in baseball.

In the past 40 years, salaries have gone up and down but ticket prices have never been reduced. Leigh Steinberg, an agent from Los Angeles, represents more than 30 athletes. In every contract he has negotiated, he has attempted to include a clause whereby the athlete would take a pay cut every time the owner lowered prices. In every case, the owners refused to sign.

So who does buy all the tickets? Some rich individuals certainly do. But most of the tickets go to corporations. In 1977 corporations purchased 78 percent of all baseball season tickets, accounted for 34 percent of all baseball attendance, and were responsible for 42 percent of baseball's revenue. Nearly half the teams in the National Hockey League sell out the entire year on a season-ticket basis. Corporate purchases account for 54 percent of the total.

You may not know a jump shot from an audible, but you still pay for tickets. Not for yourself, not for your nephew, but for General Motors and Bethlehem Steel. When these corporations build stadium boxes or buy season tickets, they just write it off their taxes as a business expense. Less taxes for them means more for you.



Singlejack Books  
Box 1906, San Pedro, CA  
90733

Robert Miles, a longshore worker, and Stan Weir, a former auto and longshore worker and labor educator are concerned that "almost none of the workplace literature has been written by those who spend over half their waking lives" in it. So they publish, in 3 1/2" x 5" format, books that communicate "the condition of our lives and the good in them." Four new Little Books have recently been added to their series. *Nightshift in a Pickle Factory* by Steve Turner (\$1.95, 64 pp.) reads like a strange dream, but it is a true story. Turner's pickle factory is one of the many workplaces whose internal life is so full of irrationalities that people have a hard time believing that comic-opera stories they produce.

Martin Glaberman's *The Grievance—Poems from the Shop Floor* (\$.95, 32 pp.) com-

prises nine poems on industrial life. The author worked for more than 20 years in the auto industry and held several union posts. The title poem is a funny, biting satire of one worker's effort to get a window opened on a sweaty summer day. The poem has been passed from hand to hand and posted on locker room walls throughout Detroit. *Waterfront Supercargo* by Tom Murray (\$1.95, 64 pp.) is a colorful collection of anecdotes of a bygone era, the San Francisco docks before containerization. It features workers who take out their frustrations on each other as well as those who physically humble "fat head" supervisors. *Foundry Foreman*, *Foundrymen* by Lloyd Zimpel (\$1.95, 64 pp.) presents two harrowing tales of life in foundry work, both told by the foreman. The reader should have a wet towel ready when reading the second story, "Ovenman." In the worst job

there, the ovenman moves racks of cores in and out of a raging furnace. The foreman has the impossible job of finding ways to keep employees from quitting. One day the ovenman burns his arm and the foreman must fill in for a few days. The consequences reveal his difficult position in the stepladder of production.

PR

## People's History and Socialist Theory

Edited by Raphael Samuel  
Routledge and Kegan Paul,  
9 Park St., Boston, MA 02108  
417 pp., \$35

Few of the 49 essays in this provocative book address directly the relationship between people's history and socialist theory, though Samuel's introduction and, to a lesser extent, Peter Burke's brief articles do advance the discussion of both themes. Instead, the bulk of the collection—and the virtue of the collection—consists of brief writings on a remarkable variety of topics being pursued by participants in the British socialist historians' group History Workshop. Some sections revisit old debates on such standard topics as the role of the state, the origins of fascism and



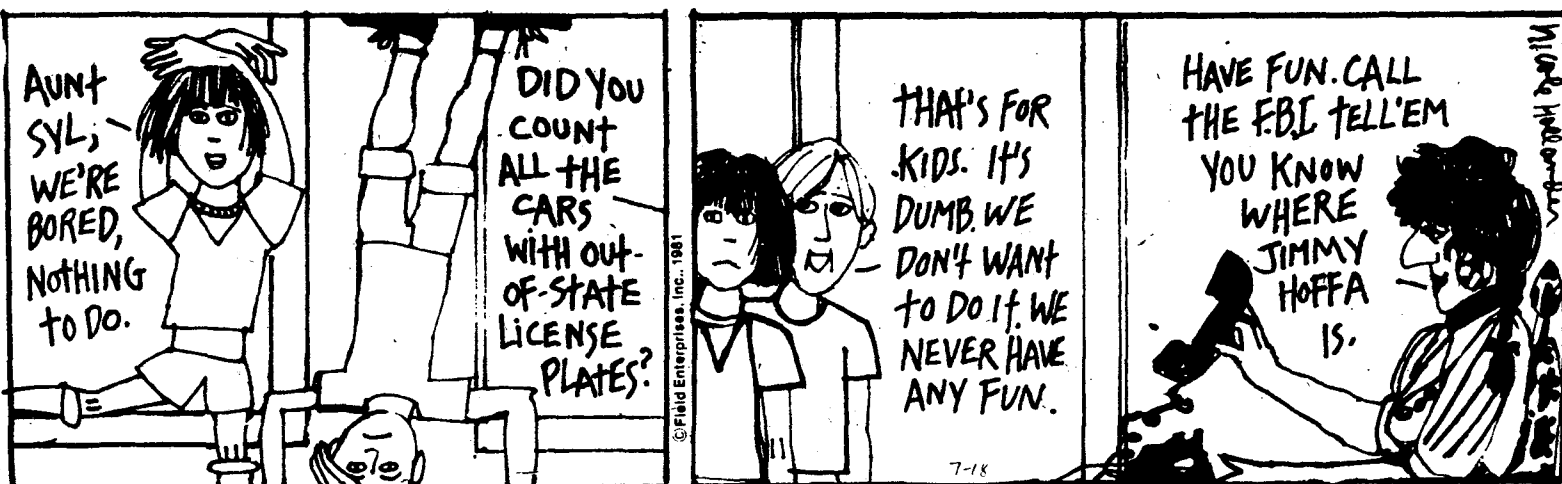
the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Others break new ground in treating subjects such as local history, oral tradition and popular culture. An excellent threesome of essays explores that bane of Marxist historiography—peasantries. Many of the works are summaries of sometimes stormy History Workshop sessions and have an unfinished quality which is best understood as a freshness based on common grouping for tough answers. In this regard, Jerry White's essay "Beyond Autobiography" is a particularly honest contribution to problems of doing socialist local history in a way that is at once analytically rigorous, accessible and politically relevant. Indeed, White's essay is typical in that, although such noted scholars as Burke, E.P. Thompson, Tim Mason, Perry Anderson and Sheila Rowbotham contribute competently, the best of the book comes from lesser known writers, especially Ian Carter on Scottish peasantries and Alessandro Triulzi on African historiography.

DRR

Contributors: David Roediger, Paul Rosenstein.

## SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander





## ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

## COALITION FOR BETTER TV

## The tactic of intimidating advertisers

Three months ago the Coalition for Better Television, a merger of the Moral Majority with the Rev. Donald Wildmon and the National Federation of Decency, began monitoring TV programs for sex, violence and profanity. They intended to boycott advertisers of offending programs. On June 29 the efficacy of the tactic was proven when Wildmon announced that no boycott was necessary since advertisers—especially Proctor and Gamble and RCA—are eager to confer with CBTV on any possible changes in their support.

Media reformers have found

themselves divided over CBTV's methods. IN THESE TIMES asked two people who usually stand on the same side in media reform battles to explain their differing opinions on the use by CBTV of an advertiser boycott. Both responded without seeing the other's comments.

Peggy Charren is head of Action for Children's Television, which for more than a decade has pressured for upgrading children's TV programming. Nicholas Johnson, an FCC commissioner between 1966 and 1973, is chair of the National Citizens Communications Lobby.

right for a network executive to put some programs on and take others off and it's perfectly all right for advertisers to choose what programs they support and we will never define that as censorship. But if any member of the audience complains about what's on TV in a way that might have impact on that program's content, that is censorship." If they are saying the latter, it's riddled with hypocrisy.

Advertisers don't care about sex and violence. They care about profits and about controversy. Corporations are scared of controversy of any kind. They'll take opposite positions on the same subject depending on the pressure. When it was controversial to do so, they wouldn't hire blacks. When it looked bad to take that stand they went out of their way to prove they're not racist.

What many critics of CBTV's strategy really have an argument with is that they don't share the same programming values as this group. Peggy Charren has used strategies over the years that were unabashedly and successfully aimed at altering program content on TV. No one really questioned her ends. There's a universal belief that a program that gets kids to brush their teeth is better for them than a Roadrunner cartoon.

But obviously one of the effects of that is that advertisers would rather be supporting programs that get an award from ACT than those that receive criticism. Pressure of some kind is being put on advertisers and broadcasters, with the end in view of affecting program content. If that's censorship when done by CBTV then it's censorship when done by ACT. And I don't think it's censorship when done by either.

The reason I don't like advertiser boycotts is that you have a small group of people who have an impact that goes far beyond their numbers. Of course it's a bad strategy because it plays on the fear corporations have of controversy. It risks that things will get taken off the air that large numbers of people would like to see, and that does not serve the democratic end. But the ways in which the strategy has been criticized are based either in inaccuracy or hypocrisy. Unless you're willing to come up with something more effective you're essentially telling people they have no right to

affect programming.

The solution lies in industry restructuring. With pay-per-channel or pay-per-program cable TV people can pay for what they see. Then it seems to me that the basis for criticizing program content falls away to the level brought to bear on bookstores, theaters and so on. Then by boycotting programs they don't like, people will have an impact. A break in the industry structure is coming. One of the advantages of cable with 50 to 100 channels, for instance, is that you've got a chance to get the programs you want. Sure, they need capital to get produced, but it's easier to get capital behind that than it is to get programs through a high-barrier-to-entry, over-the-air, three network system. Those who criticize the current choice of strategies by CBTV are looking at symptoms rather than causes. ■

Con

By Peggy Charren

Action for Children's Television has responded to the efforts of media reformers in a variety of ways. In 1975, CBS' Arthur Taylor introduced the concept of the Family Hour, and it was adopted into the NAB Television Code, with the blessings of

best, the worst, the most objectionable and even the most offensive. ACT has over and over again expressed its disagreement with this method of TV reform, which puts the PTA in the position of arbiter of the airwaves for the nation's parents. Although ACT does give a series of awards each year to particularly creative new children's programs, we are not—nor do we wish to be—TV's quality control inspector. ACT has also refused to join or support the anti-violence campaigns of the National Citizen's Committee for Broadcasting (NCCB) or National Coalition on Television Violence (NCTV) because they involve protests against specific programs.

And then we come to the current efforts of the Moral Majority-supported Coalition for Better TV. This time, ACT has not simply expressed disagreement with a policy of TV reform that leads to censorship and a narrowing of TV viewing options. This time ACT launched a national petition campaign to protest the actions of the New Right crusade to censor the airwaves.

Why is the Moral Majority's TV monitoring effort and proposed advertiser boycott different from the other groups' attempts at TV reform? There are three big differences between the Moral Majority and the other TV reform groups I have mentioned.

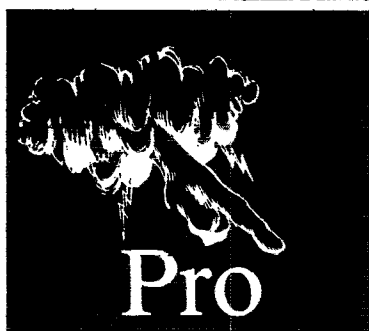
The Moral Majority isn't just out to try to improve children's TV viewing experiences. It wants to control communications in this country. Its stated goal is to purge the nation of what it calls

about the evils of TV to boost conservative political campaigns.

Finally, they have a good chance of succeeding. They have money and political power and access to the nation's airwaves. At last count, Jerry Falwell was on Boston TV for a total of six hours every Sunday.

I am not saying that we should try to stop them—we have no right to curtail their freedom to speak any more than they have a right to curtail ours. But we have more than a right—we have an obligation—to protest the actions of the Moral Majority and the Coalition for Better TV.

ACT never says, "Take that program off the air." Instead, we have some major strategies that we work to implement in order to broaden children's viewing options. We petition the FCC to increase the amount of service to children, so they will have more program choice. We work to bring more minorities and women into positions of power in the TV industry, because this will help to eliminate racism and sexism from TV programming. We encourage increased funding of public television, which provides a non-commercial alternative for children. We educate broadcasters and cablecasters about the diverse needs of young audiences. We encourage the spread of the alternative technologies such as cable television and videodisc, which increase program choice for children. We educate parents to get involved in their local cable franchising process, carefully consult the TV schedule and turn off the television more often. Finally, we work to elim-

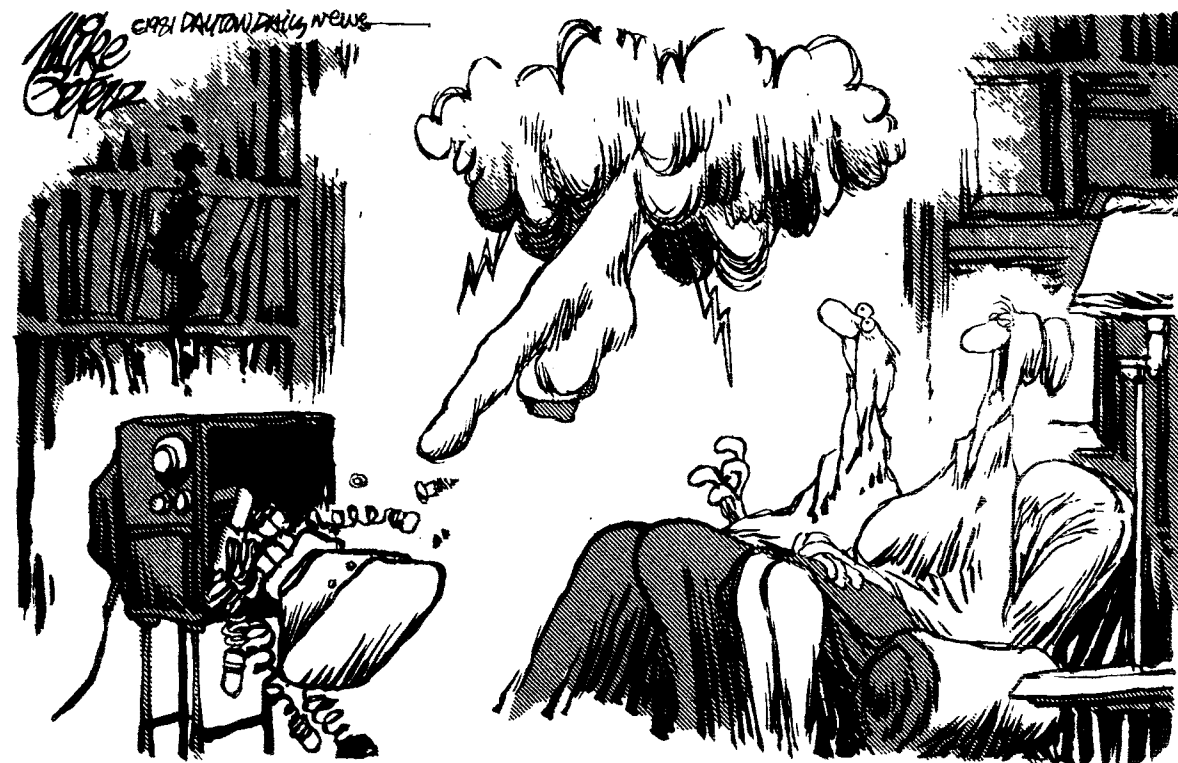


By Nicholas Johnson

This problem arises because of the way the TV industry is structured. It does not prepare programming for consumers—it sells viewers to advertisers, and therefore there is no consumer of TV programs and no marketplace. Payment is indirect, with \$15-20 billion of excess product costs.

We have become a people that spends its time when not sleeping or working watching TV. When you're talking about the average person watching TV 30 hours a week, that's essentially a three-quarter time job. Any industry with that kind of an impact on the American people is vested with a very heavy public interest, whether or not Congress and the courts say so (although they have said so). This is true anywhere, even in a totalitarian society. But in a democratic society we try to create mechanisms whereby people can have an impact on the institutions that have the greatest effect on them. The mechanism we have in other areas of media is the marketplace—books, movies, magazines are exchanged for money. While there has been some pressure by Moral Majority-oriented people on bookstores, theaters and record stores, there's been almost none compared with what they've brought to bear on TV. I think that's not an accident. I think they recognize that there is a difference between something for which we pay money and bring into our homes and advertiser-supported TV.

We've got a system with enormous power to dominate our lives and there's no way we can control it in the marketplace or the polling booth. Those who oppose the notion of advertiser boycotts have got to be saying one of two things. Either they say, "We have a better strategy for you to have an impact on programming"—and I have yet to hear their alternatives. Or they are saying, "It's perfectly all



MUST BE ANOTHER SHOW BANNED BY THE MORAL MAJORITY...

FCC chairman Richard Wiley. That year ACT joined the Writers Guild of America in filing suit against the FCC, claiming that the Family Hour provision in the Code was unconstitutional. The Family Hour created a form of censorship by limiting program choice for adult audiences for two hours every day.

In 1978 the PTA began to provide the public with lists of prime-time programs, networks and advertisers it considered the

secular humanism. That goal translates into the practice of blacklisting TV programs, banning books from libraries and textbooks from classrooms and forcing teachers to treat evolution as a dubious proposition.

Second, the Moral Majority is an avowedly political group. New Right fundraiser Richard Viguerie was quoted in the *Boston Globe* saying that he intends to use the names and the dollars that he collects from mailings

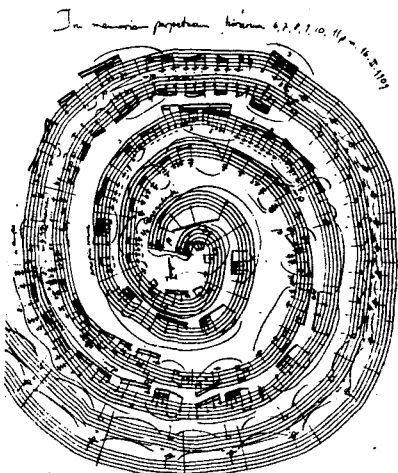
inate deceptive advertising targeted to children, based on the fact that the First Amendment does not protect deceptive commercial speech.

TV reform does not have to mean censorship and repression. The Moral Majority is trying to suppress information intended for adults in the name of children. But no one has the right to decide that it is better for us not to know. Our right to information must be inviolable. ■



## MUSIC

# Tributes for Bela Bartok



A 1909 composition "Seesaw," in Bartok's notation

By Bradley Parker-Sparrow

Charlie Mingus used to say that the only great music composed in the 20th century were the six string quartets of Hungarian-born pianist and composer Bela Bartok. The 100th anniversary of Bartok's birth is celebrated this year.

Bartok projected a profound sense of nationalism and anti-fascism both in his musical experiments and his political beliefs. By touring eastern Europe and northern Africa with his

Edison disc recorder he preserved and notated volumes of folk music. Today thousands of songs exist in volumes marked by country and region, all hand transcribed by Bartok.

The combination of his folk studies with his classical Austrian-German musical upbringing created a musical balance in his own work. Dissonance is a part of European folk systems. Peasant scales, dance forms and rhythms combined with classical systems in his work to create a new style of composition.

There are three chronological divisions in Bartok's music. The early compositions and studies, which he began at the age of nine, reflect the romantic styles of Brahms and Beethoven. *Kossuth*, a symphonic poem in 10 tableaux, is an excellent example of Bartok the romantic. The second period is the most fertile, with compositions like *Seven Sketches* for solo piano, 1910, and *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, 1936. This period spanned almost 40 years. The third period, dating from Bartok's flight from Hitler to the U.S. in 1940, contains compositions affected by social condi-

tions and by Bartok's poor health. The music returns to romantic forms and most of the energy and passion is contained. *The Third Piano Concerto*, 1945, composed for his wife and *The Concerto for Orchestra*, 1943, are examples of this style.

There have been scattered Bartok festivals this year across the world, especially in his native Hungary. In New York the Juilliard Quartet, pianist Murray Perahia and several other organizations gave modest tributes. In Chicago Hungarian-born Georg Solti gave a mini-festival of Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*, *Dance Suite*, and the first violin and piano concertos.

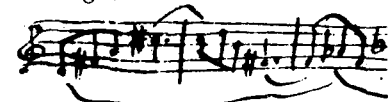
One of the most positive results of this anniversary is the Classics Record Library, Book of the Month Club's pressing of the three-record set *Bela Bartok: A Musical Celebration*. The album is a bold, precise effort with the following compositions contained in a boxed set: *Concerto for Orchestra*, 1943; *Sonata Number 2 for Violin and Piano*, 1922; *Violin Concerto Number 2*, 1937-38; *Rhapsody Number 1 for Violin and Piano*, 1904; *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, 1936; and *Piano Concerto Number 1*, 1926.

The set's concise liner notes and musical excerpts provide the listener with an excellent source of clear background information. Many of these recordings are repressings of sides issued on the Columbia record label, featuring the great George Szell

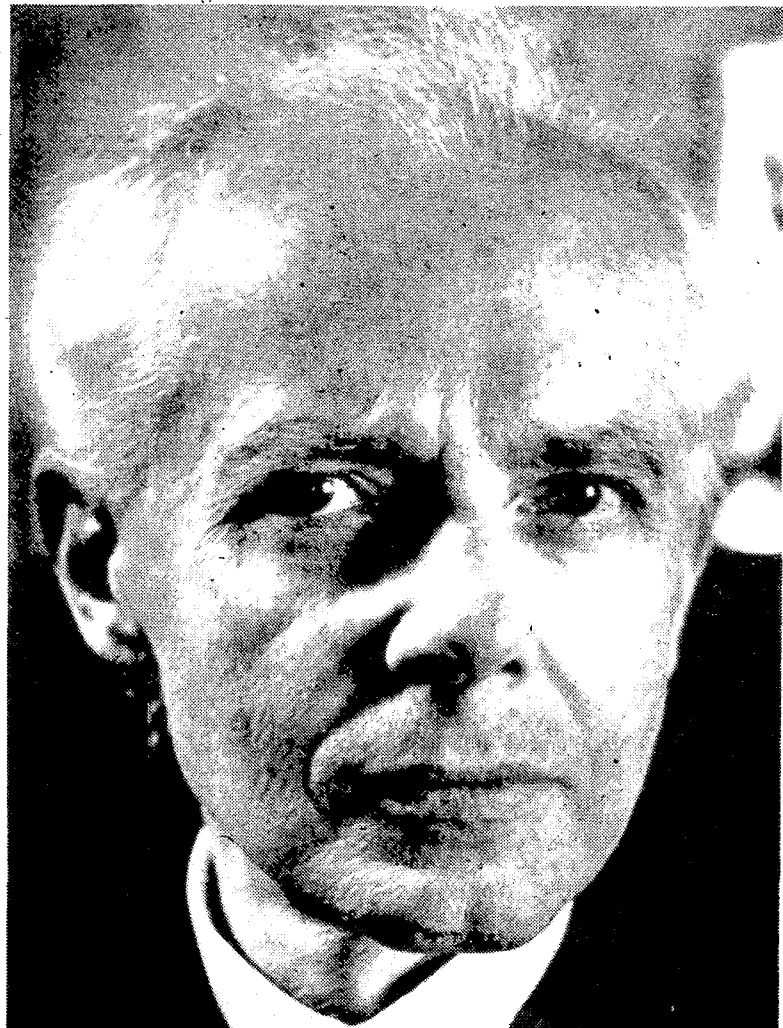
and Leonard Bernstein. Szell, who conducted the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra until his death, has left the world with a landmark modern classical recording in his treatment of Bartok's *First Piano Concerto*. Pianist Rudolf Serkin plays with controlled passion, and there are unsurpassed orchestral con-

versations between pianist and conductor.

Bradley Parker-Sparrow is a jazz pianist and composer in Chicago.



Bartok in 1936



## FILM

## Hitting the road after *Jonah*

By Kay Trimmerger

Alain Tanner's 1979 film, *Messidor*, has finally opened in New York. Tanner has been hailed as one of the few commercial filmmakers who captures the sensibility and politics of the new left. This was especially true of his most successful film, *Jonah who will be 25 in the year 2000*, written in collaboration with John Berger and released in 1976. His films with less explicit political content—*Charles Dead or Alive*, *La Salamandre* and *Middle of the World*—also speak to those shaped by the new left.

*Messidor* is less enjoyable than these previous films because it lacks their warm, whimsical quality, and a comparable dialectic of hope and despair. *Messidor* is all despair. It has two central characters, two young Swiss women—a 19-year-old history student and an 18-year-old worker—who meet while hitchhiking. In stages, they decide to hit the road together.

During a 1979 Pacific Film Archive retrospective, Tanner said he used women as the central focus in order to make an "anti-road" film, depicting contemporary descent into a nightmare of meaninglessness. But he did not intend to say anything about women. The ponderous and often monotonous film of two women traveling back and forth through the lovely countryside and orderly cities of Switzerland—two people who become increasingly outlaws, bored and crazy—does evoke the alienation and crisis of meaning in bourgeois society. But the film is much more interesting for what

it suggests about the contemporary problems of women and about the increasing hostility between women and men.

*Messidor* begins with a fantasy that many teenage girls experience—the desire to go on the road like men can and do. It also evokes the liberation many of us felt when we did hitchhike with

the bonds of conventionality. They forsake convention by "playing a game" to see how far they can go without money. This game leads them to steal a gun and food, and to become outlaws, made into a national sensation by TV. Their game leads them into periods of depression and craziness, culminating in the

ships today. But in writing a film plot that begins with men attempting to rape women and ends with these women shooting an innocent man, Tanner also implicitly expresses the contemporary hostility between women and men.

### Jonah's hope.

The women in *Jonah* are strong and many are non-conventional, but they remain within the bounds of traditional expectations for women. The men, however, break with stereotypes by entering fully into personal

the elderly. In this way, Tanner captures one part of the hope of the early feminist movement of the late '60s—that men would change as much as women.

*Jonah* locates the sources of oppression and despair almost totally in the public realm. In their personal lives people retain and sustain hope. All the adults enjoy good, heterosexual relationships, although in both *Jonah* and *Messidor* Tanner makes brief reference to lesbianism. Men and women accept each other in light, whimsical ways, without expressing deep emotion. There are lots of children in the film; they are all cute and well-behaved. It's unclear who cares for them, but it seems to present no problem.

In contrast to the film's appealing vision, the reality for many survivors of the new left—at least in the U.S.—has been that personal life in the '70s is stormy and painful. As the '60s generation moves into their middle and late 30s the question of whether to have children and how to raise them becomes a source of anguish for many men and women. One result of the feminist movement has been to make some heterosexual women demand deeper intimacy from men. Disappointment in the inability and unwillingness of many men to respond to their emotional expectations has fueled feminist hostility. And men too often harbor deep-seated resentment towards women.

Unlike the women in *Jonah*, those in *Messidor* express their anger towards men, but men are also hostile to women. In expressing his own depression about the '70s, Tanner evokes the problems of male-female relations. Recognizing the prevalence of such dilemmas is only a first, but necessary, step to move beyond them.

Kay Trimmerger teaches sociology and women's studies at Sonoma State University, Calif.



Alain Tanner's new film evokes despair at the state of male-female relations.

a woman friend, or that we still feel when we go backpacking in the mountains with women.

The film soon brings us back to harsh reality with an attempted rape scene. After this the two women face the choice that shapes the rest of the film—to go back to their traditional roles and restricted lives or to break

shooting of an unknown man who they (wrongly) believe tipped off the police.

During this long road to self-destruction, Tanner shows the two women developing a close, supportive, emotional and perhaps sexual relationship. He is sensitive to the nuances of what is best about women's relation-

life; they are emotionally open, warm and supportive, not only with women, but with each other. The men in *Jonah* form stable, desirable relationships and help build genuine community. One of the men initiates an alternative school for the children and another man brings love and song into the lives of



## DOCUMENTARIES

# Depression was boom for some artists

*WPA projects provided the groundwork for a postwar American art and literary renaissance.*

By Pat Aufderheide

*New Deal for Artists* (shown on PBS stations July 1 and still to be shown on others) is an unpretentious 90-minute survey of federal programs for artists during the Roosevelt era. It charts the rise of four branches—Writers, Theater, Photography and Arts Projects—and their collapse under right-wing pressure spearheaded by Rep. Martin Dies' Un-American Activities Committee by the beginning of World War II.

At the outset Studs Terkel, in his upbeat irascible way, bemoans our ability to forget the past. Indeed, by the film's end it seems astonishing that we have managed to remember so little about such an influential,

Just as the film seems set to slide into a set of congratulatory interviews with veterans of the era (including Kenneth Rexroth, Meridel LeSueur and Jerre Mangione), one's attention is sharply brought back by the controversy that the projects generated. It was a time, several artists and writers remind us, when revolution seemed around the corner. The use of art for social change seemed obvious to a highly visible minority among the artists. The Children's Theater went on nationwide tours with shows like *Revolt of the Beavers*, an allegory of revolution. Theater Project administrators used the productions to address racial discrimination. Photographers focused on phenomena like Pie Town, a communally run town for the rural dispossessed.

The bent of these and other projects brought attention from both left and right. Painter Bernarda Bryson-Shahn describes the interest of the Communist Party in controlling the movement, although she dismisses its capacity to do so. Much more powerful was the right's attack on the notion of federal subsidy to the arts, especially through congressional inquiry.

The Theater Project was perhaps the most experimental and boldly left of the WPA branches. Joseph Losey (who has lived



Blacks flocked to performances of classics by black actors.

something the interviews barely touch on—the immediate grassroots impact of these projects. They not only trained and kept artists alive, but also allowed both new and well-established artists to reach new audiences. They redefined the relationship between artist and audience as well as between artist and subject matter. But that's something we get in narration rather than testimony.

What we see, though, is less than half the original project. Ironically but typically, Swedes and Germans will get a more complete view of our history than we will, since foreign TV bought four 45-minute films—one on each project—from producer Weiland Schulz-Keil.

Here PBS put in a few thousand dollars to buy the film but, pleading poverty, sent the producer to Mobil and Exxon for the rest of the purchase price. Their representatives decided it was too controversial a subject. That left Schulz-Keil with a deficit and PBS with a cheap film but only a minuscule ad budget.

Schulz-Keil has his own criticisms of the film, especially the shorter version. "It had to be a survey," he said last week to *In These Times*. "So few people know about these things that one must present a large amount of information. You can't provide adequate critical evaluation of the art. So the film seems overly enthusiastic to me. I didn't even touch, for instance, the way the Writers and Arts Projects were marked by anti-modernist tendencies—attempts to paint the past in idyllic ways, the enthusiasm shown for a technological future. The film concentrates on the huge administrative effort and on the political ramifications of its downfall. It also implies that the Roosevelt era was a shining example of social democracy in an otherwise disastrously conservative continuum, and I think the reality was more qualified."

Schulz-Keil faced a massive research problem, because when he began the project in 1977 very little had been done on the arts projects. The few existing archives remain sadly incomplete. If it's astonishing to think that

we know so little now of this movement, it's equally astonishing to discover how little was done at the time with the wealth of material generated by the projects. Of the 300,000 photographs taken, for instance, only 20 were every widely disseminated.

Schulz-Keil, a German theater director, became interested in this subject when he came here to work after producing theater in France, Germany and England.

"I knew something about public subsidies," he explained.

"And I was absolutely unprepared for the lack of public funding here, for the notion that one could finance serious cultural activity by selling tickets at the box office."

A film like this couldn't be better timed than now, when the comparative pittance of arts funding is being eyed for budgetary surgery.

The film is available from WSK Productions, 5 Carmine St., NYC 10014, (212) 989-2626. You can also call or write your PBS station to urge them to show or rerun the program.



An all-day community sing at Pie Town, New Mexico in 1940.

though brief, movement.

An entire generation of American painters, we learn, got their start in Arts Projects training program. Subsidies kept writers like Ralph Ellison, Nelson Algren, Richard Wright and Saul Bellow working, and paved the way for a post-war literary renaissance. Projects were massive—2,566 murals were created, many in post offices. Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, Ben Shahn and a host of others took hundreds of thousands of photographs of an impoverished rural reality undreamt of by urban bureaucrats.

After establishing the scope of the effort, the film explores the ways these programs addressed social issues and fostered social change. Black history was recovered with the transcription of ex-slave narratives. Black theater technicians got their first chance to crack the racist barrier of their union. In one of the few moments when the film stops to focus on one kind of art, Native American artists who were trained in WPA programs demonstrate their paintings, done in a style consistent with their traditions.

in England since he was blacklisted in 1952), John Houseman, narrator Orson Welles and Will Greer tell the film's most interesting story. They staged several theatrical productions that bucked right pressure, culminating in a labor opera, *The Cradle Will Rock*. The administration shut down this popular opera mid-performance in New York. The cast and crew managed to find another hall on the spot and took the audience on a hike across Manhattan that garnered front-page headlines.

It may have been a glorious moment for *The Cradle Will Rock*, but it spelled the end for the Theater Project. Step by step, other branches were dismantled. Control over the Writers Project, the second-hottest political potato, was transferred to the states, which were often conservative. The Office of War Information took over the photographs at the onset of war. Most paintings were simply lost, many post office murals painted over.

## Stripped-down version.

The picked-up pace of the second part of the film hints at

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In those commercials where he hypes Chrysler cars rather than imports, Lee Iacocca can be seen wearing \$75 imported eyeglass frames. (Zodiac)

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Canadian researchers have found that rich people waste much more energy than poor people do. (Zodiac)

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# Iran

Continued from page 9

since the revolution in which it played a secondary role. But it has been grievously divided and unable to form a cogent force in Iranian politics. And a significant portion of the left also supports Khomeini. The pro-Soviet Tudeh Party believes that the Ayatollah is, on balance, "anti-imperialist" and that the regime will have no option but to adopt a socialist-oriented path of development. They also admit, in private, that they have little influence over the masses, who are dominated by "medieval" forms of political ideology. They are all too conscious of the dilemmas faced by small Communist parties in such situations: the dangers of riding the tiger are often as great as those of confronting it. Yet even though its paper has now been banned, Tudeh has not opposed the IRP and it has been joined in this by a majority of the once-powerful guerrillas.

The only force capable of restoring Bani-Sadr to power are the armed forces: but they have no unified command and have been badly demoralized by the purges of the last two years. They are also fighting the war with Iraq which, though quiet for some months, could flare at any time. Reports from Tehran indicate that the police and parts of the air force have come out in support of Bani-Sadr; but it would appear that, despite the killing of Behdeshti and his associates, the IRP has for the moment been successful in its bid for full power.

Fred Halliday, a fellow of the IPS Transnational Institute, is an editor of *New Left Review*.

# Israel

Continued from page 9

try's cities and towns. This fast-growing sector of the population—North Africans and Asians who immigrated 20 to 30 years ago and their descendants—continued the trend it has set since the late 1960s: rejection of the Labor "establishment," held responsible for the wide

socio-economic-cultural gap between European and Afro-Asian Jews, in favor of the ultra-nationalist Likud, led by a fiery Polish grandfather.

So despite Labor's 50 percent gain, the Likud actually holds more seats in the new Knesset (parliament) than it did in the old, and theoretically can form a government at least as strong as the fractured one that held on to power quite impressively for several years before the recent election.

In 1977 some 250,000 middle-class Israelis, most of European origin, abandoned the Labor Party and voted for the meteoric Democratic Movement for Change. Lured by the DMC's promise to force, as part of a Labor coalition, a move toward greater secularization and away from pseudo-socialist paternalist bureaucracy toward economic liberalization, these voters watched aghast as their party joined a government already formed by that election's biggest winner, Begin's Likud.

This time, revolted by the right's total surrender to clericalism, by its economic bungling and, most of all, by its military adventurism and "unrealistic" settlement practices in the West Bank, the centrist voters returned to Labor. True, they wavered for a long time, confounding the pollsters by registering solidly undecided before June 30. But the clincher for this bloc came during the final two weeks, after Begin effectively stigmatized Labor as nearly traitorous for daring to voice even mild criticism of his brinkmanship with Syria over anti-aircraft missiles in Lebanon and of the air raid against Iraq's nuclear reactor. On cue, gangs of young *lumpen* elements took matters into their own hands, fire-bombing Labor offices, breaking windows that displayed Labor stickers, and roughing up party workers.

"It's us against them," was Labor's desperate appeal in ads openly recalling the spectre of 1930s Europe. Unfortunately, the statement had racist overtones concerning the "them" whose political experience in Middle Eastern countries of origin included neither democracy nor fascism. But at least what is left of the "us" responded with a solid, if not enthusiastic, vote against chaos and extremism.

Voters whose sympathies lay clearly to Labor's left were also caught up in the

anti-fascist panic. Shinui, a remnant of the 1977 DMC's left wing, and the Citizens Rights Movement, close to Labor's doves (including several Peace Now movement leaders) and strongly civil libertarian, won only two or three seats between them. Had these parties' sympathizers been confident that Labor would be strong enough to form a government, they would likely have emerged with three times the vote.

Sheli, the left-Zionist, pro-Palestinian-state alliance that won two seats in 1977, this time kept only 25 percent of its voters and failed to hold a single seat. A victim of bitter infighting, Sheli too lost votes of left-wing kibbutz members and others who believed the doubtful argument that a higher Labor total was necessary to stop the Likud. A similar phenomenon occurred even among Israel's Arab citizens, who in 1977 gave over 50 percent of their votes to the Communist-led Democratic Front for Peace and Equality. This time, the figure was more like 40 percent, with the balance going to Labor, and the DFPE won only four seats instead of five.

But Labor gains were not Likud losses, and now these left and Arab voters face the likelihood of four more years of right-wing rule with fewer consistent opposition voices in the Knesset than ever before. Labor is a decidedly mixed bag when it comes to opposing settlements, defending democracy and representing workers' interests. With a few exceptions, its line on the Palestinian question is nearly as hard as the Likud's.

In fact, some Labor MKs, elected with the help of leftist votes, may be susceptible to calls emanating from various quarters for breaking the deadlock by forming a "national unity government," at least as a temporary measure until new elections are held. But nothing is so untimely as a viable formula for consolidating political power, into which such a coalition of the center-right could evolve. Looking at the bright side, it might conceivably have the strength to lead Israel into serious political and territorial concessions if international pressure for a comprehensive settlement in the region made them necessary.

But judging by the U.S. attitude under Carter and now especially under Reagan, such pressure seems unlikely.

Without pressure to modify its behavior, a national unity government could also make it much easier to adopt a war-like foreign policy accompanied by domestic repression. If any significant segment of Labor joined such a venture, the remaining opposition would be small and demoralized. As it is, Labor's electoral backing today is tenuous: the middle-class democrats and the leftists who brought it close to the Likud total all considered Labor—each group for its own reasons—the lesser evil.

The core of the existing coalition, by contrast, actually gained strength in the recent election. The Likud itself won five more seats than in 1977 and, for the near future at least, is close to being a single

party, in contrast to the splintered body it had become by late 1979, united only by the desire not to lose power. This more than makes up for the religious parties' overall loss of three seats.

It has been predicted that the National Religious Party, whose strength was halved from 12 to six, may push for new elections soon in order to recoup its surprising loss, which followed internal feuding, a last-minute split and numerous allegations of corruption. But despite its numerical drop in strength, the arithmetic of coalition-building puts the NRP in as pivotal a position as ever. Once they presumably reoccupy their favorite ministries, the politician-rabbis will not want to risk losing their jobs.

That risk could be substantial if predictions by most of Israel's economists—Likud supporters included—bear out. The election was won by emptying the treasury and printing tremendous quantities of money, raising wages (only to the pre-1978 austerity levels), lowering taxes, and paying off various commercial interest groups. This practice cannot be continued indefinitely (nor can military crises be constantly manufactured) and harsh measures—serious unemployment and/or major pay cuts—will be deemed necessary to save Israeli capitalism from hyper-hyperinflation. (130 percent is already "normal.")

Five months after the Likud came to power in 1977, hundreds of thousands of Israeli workers were out on the streets in protest against its economic program; many of them had voted for Begin. By the beginning of 1981, dissatisfaction on the same issue was such that less than 15 percent of those asked said they would vote for the Likud.

# Boston

Continued from page 6

tions after promises were made about them, remain distrustful of city officials.

In the end, city governments may close down stations in those neighborhoods from which they expect the least resistance. The firehouse groups are not disbanding after their victories, however, and may present a formidable political force in future budget battles. People's Fire House Number 2 in Charlestown has already begun raising money to maintain a permanent organization. And members of Jamaica Plain Fair Share are preparing themselves for their next round of battles with Boston city officials.

In Salem, where daily demonstrations make long-range planning difficult, Rose Bouchard hopes that her "one big family" in People's Fire House Number 6 doesn't disappear after their victory. "It's a shame that something like this has to happen to pull the neighborhood together. I have a good feeling that after this is all over, we'll figure out some way to stay together."

Jerome Rubin writes for the *Somerville Community News*.

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### CHICAGO, IL

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### SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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The Jewish Film Festival, an alternative collection of award-winning international independent cinema, will take place at the Roxie

Cinema, 16th Street and Valencia. Programs include: Israeli New Wave Cinema, Yiddish Culture and Labor, Contemporary Identity. For more information, call (415) 849-2710.

### MILWAUKEE, WI

#### July 29-August 2

1980's: New Opportunities/New Dangers—10th Annual NAM (New American Movement) Convention. Speakers include Robert Lynch, Michael Harrington, Aqbal Ahmad, Michael Lerner, Heidi Tarver, Barbara Ehrenreich, Carl Marzani, Dorothy Healey. Concert with Kris Lems. Join us at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. For registration information: NAM, 3244 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 871-7700.

### CORNWALL, CT

#### August 26-30

Left Economic Strategy for the 1980s: URPE (Union for Radical Political Economics) Annual Summer Conference at Camp Mohawk. Speakers include: Barry Commoner, Mark Green, Barry Bluestone, Sam Bowles, Joan Greenbaum, Judy Gregory, Carol O'Cleiracain, Anno Saxenian and Harley Shaiken. Must pre-register: URPE, 40 Union Square West, Room 901, New York, NY 10003. (212) 691-5722.



# Spies

Continued from page 24

annually on plainclothes agents and sophisticated listening equipment to be used against anti-nuclear activists.

"This surveillance does not follow from the possibility of terrorist acts," argues Peterzell. "It arises from the fact that, when citizens organize to protest policies of the government or private industry which they feel adversely affect their lives, these institutions tend to respond, not only with reasoned argument, but also by attempting to suppress the protest."

Linda Lotz of the Washington-based Campaign for Political Rights says her group has identified cases of "surveillance, video-taping, infiltration, harassment and other actions in at least 40 states. Roughly 50 percent of these actions were conducted by private organizations—either by the utilities themselves or by freelance agencies."

One of the largest groups providing information on anti-nuclear groups and other political activists is the U.S. Labor Party through its newsletter, *Investigative Leads*. Local police officials in Washington, D.C., and in Dade County, Fla., have confirmed that the USLP maintains a world wide staff of investigators and sources. According to one Washington police intelligence officer, the USLP maintains the largest such organization in

the U.S., often exchanging their data on environmental and political groups with police departments.

Environmental groups are not a leading source of the rising terrorist threat, according to Robert Angrisoni, communications director of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). In other areas, however, the IACP actively promotes "greater use of private security services," Angrisoni says. In September the IACP itself plans to begin operating an information sharing system with multi-national corporations interested in protection against real terrorists.

Already the IACP has received a seed grant from Motorola Corp. for development of its multi-national data sharing system.

IN THESE TIMES JULY 15-28, 1981 23

The Rand Corporation's Brian Jenkins, while acknowledging the rationales for increased privatization of security and intelligence gathering, is concerned about its long run consequences. He foresees a serious erosion in the quality of American life as growing numbers of affluent private citizens decide to "purchase" security for themselves.

"What we're seeing is the medievalization of society, when cities were walled and public figures and the rich only went out with armed retainers or sent their scouts before them," said Jenkins. "Maybe we ought to be asking ourselves if that's what we really want."

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JULY-AUGUST, JEWISH CURRENTS, Editorial: "After the Bombing—What Now?" Morris U. Schappes, "Forced Assimilation in the USSR," Harry Slochower, "Soviet Psychiatry as Punishment," Single copy \$1. Subscription \$10 USA, Jewish Currents, Dept. T, 22 East 17 St., NYC 10034. New pamphlet, "Soviet Jewish Situation," Gordon, Harap, Magill, Resnick, Schappes. \$1.

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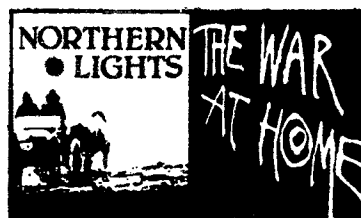
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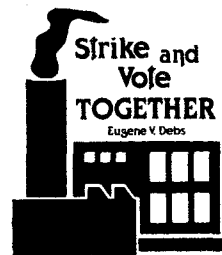
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By Frank Browning

**T**WELVE YEARS AGO VERSIE KIMBLE injured his shoulder while working in a factory in southern Louisiana. He sued his employer and a jury awarded him \$35,000. Once the suit was settled Versie Kimble went back to work at another company and in another accident he broke his finger and was awarded \$6,500 in compensation. Both settlements were recorded by a little known private organization called the Industrial Foundation of America. For eight months Kimble was unable to find a job whenever he used his proper name and Social Security number.

In 1972 Kimble found work with a company that did not subscribe to the services of the Foundation. But a year later his employer joined the Foundation, and as a part of its new membership all current employees were checked against the Foundation's files. Versie Kimble was fired. The reason cited: "engaging in politics." Kimble sued.

Since 1974 he has been able to find work in Foundation-member companies only by falsely presenting his wife's Social Security number. His suit is still pending before the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. "It's like an industrial CIA," one Louisiana labor lawyer fumed.

### Booming Business

The Industrial Foundation of America is only one of the growing number of agencies that provide data to private groups concerned about everything from potentially risky medical patients to international terrorists to the latest plans of anti-nuclear activists. Intelligence gathering once was chiefly the domain of public governmental agencies but has recently expanded astronomically in the private

sector. As one measure of that growth, membership in the American Society of Industrial Security—restricted to persons holding managerial positions in the private security industry—has jumped from 4,000 individuals in 1973 to more than 15,000 today.

A sampling of the private security and data collectors includes such diverse organizations as:

- Telident, a southern California company that promises doctors "a solution to the malpractice problem." Telident



## PRIVATE SPY

maintains lists of persons who have filed malpractice claims, as well as doctors who have testified as experts in such cases.

- The Credit Data Service of Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Co. in Kansas City, Mo., which keeps tabs on the nation's renters, including files on rent tardiness, damage, pet ownership and loud party given.

- Oil Field Security Consultants, a Texas firm that maintains its "own SWAT team of professionals who can be deployed on location to anywhere in the world within 24 hours."

- Risks International, a firm operated in Alexandria, Va. by Charles Russell, former chief of Air Force intelligence, which claims to have a more complete file on dangerous individuals than does the CIA. For \$960 per year the company will identify suspected terrorists in the U.S. or abroad and, if necessary, can negotiate with abductors.

- Research West, a private intelligence firm in Emeryville, Ca. describing its

staff as "experts on the ideological left," which for several years sold its services to Pacific Gas and Electric Co. and other electric utilities to keep track of anti-nuclear activists.

- Investigative Leads, a newsletter sold by subscription to local police departments throughout the country. It is produced by the far-right U.S. Labor Party.

Private security and intelligence gathering has undergone a tremendous growth in the last decade, according to Brian Jenkins of the Rand Institute, a private think-tank in Santa Monica, Ca. "There's going to be a multi-billion dollar a year market in the '80s for hardware alone," Jenkins says. "If you combine that with services, including intelligence, then we're talking about an industry of tens of billions of dollars per year."

Jenkins, a specialist in terrorist and counter-terrorist activity, sees the growth in private security agencies as a result of police departments' inability to provide protection to those large multi-national companies that believe themselves to be prime terrorist targets.

### Fear of Spying

The gathering of information has spread another sort of fear—fear of harassment and spying on groups engaged in lawful political activity. In an 89-page report prepared last winter for the Center for National Security Studies, attorney Jay Peterzell argued that "more than 40 percent of known spying or disruption incidents against the anti-nuclear movement are attributable to groups in the 'private sector.'"

Anti-nuclear groups have charged for several years that electrical utility companies were working with private intelligence groups. The best known such case, reported in 1977 by the Atlanta Journal, involved the Georgia Power Company, which had spent approximately \$750,000

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**ONE** firm claims to have a more complete file on "dangerous individuals" than the CIA.